

THE PRIEST
UPON HIS THRONE:

BEING

LECTURES

DELIVERED DURING LENT, 1849,

AT ST GEORGES, BLOOMSBURY.

By Twelve Clergymen of the Church of England.

WITH A PREFACE,

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P R E F A C E.

Now for the seventh time a voice has been heard from the sanctuary of God, uttering this awakening cry: "BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH." For during seven successive Lent seasons, several clergymen, some of them exercising their ministry in the great metropolis, and the others in various parts of England, have delivered Courses of Lectures at St. George's, Bloomsbury, all more or less bearing upon the Second Advent of our Lord.

If inquiry should be made as to the special object these clergymen have had in view in the delivery of these Lectures, it may be replied, so far, at least, as the writer of this Preface is concerned, and as he believes to be the case with his beloved friends and brethren who also have taken part in this work,—their object has been threefold: First, to revive attention to the very

important Scripture doctrine of the glorious Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ,—a doctrine which, during most of the last century and the beginning of the present, had very much fallen into abeyance, at least as an important practical truth. Secondly, to awaken from their slumbers that portion of the Christian Church, who, in the present peculiarly eventful times, too much resemble the virgins spoken of in the well-known parable, who, “while the bridegroom tarried, all slumbered and slept.” Thirdly, to be instrumental, by the Divine blessing, to encourage those who have listened to our Lord’s gracious warning: “Behold, I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments;” to seek for such a measure of Divine grace as may make their Christianity so attractive as to win others, who are less in earnest, to prepare to meet the Bridegroom.*

With this design, whilst they have not ceased to warn the Church against those awful judgments which will fall upon the unbelieving and impenitent before and at “the great day of the wrath of the Lamb,” they have drawn their arguments principally from the many great blessings

* See “Thoughts on the attractive Light of the Wise Virgins,” a Tract, by the Rev. J. Haldane Stewart. Published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co.

of which every sincere Christian will partake at the appearing of our Lord.

This is more particularly the case in the Fifth, and Sixth, and in the present Course of Lectures. Thus, in the Fifth Course, the attention of the hearers was drawn to the contemplation of "Good Things to come,"* when, among other interesting subjects, "Jerusalem's Glory," "The Spread of the Knowledge of the Glory of the Lord," "The Resurrection to Glory," "The Recognition of the Saints in the Kingdom," and "The Future Personal Presence of Christ in Zion," were considered.

In the Sixth Course, "Glimpses of Messiah's Glory"† were exhibited. These were given by unfolding some of the most important of the prophetic Psalms of David. Among other animating topics brought forth in these "Glimpses of Messiah's Glory," were: "Messiah's triumphant Reign, the Fruit and Reward of his Sufferings," "The Victory of Christ over the Confederate Nations," "The Triumph of the King, and his glorious Espousals," "The Joy of Creation at the Coming of the Lord," "The Dominion of the Second Adam over all Creation," and "The glorious Majesty of his Kingdom."

* Title of the Fifth.

† Title of the Sixth Course of Lectures.

These cheering "Glimpses of Messiah's Glory," obtained from the prophetic Psalms, could not but produce in the spiritual mind a longing desire for still clearer manifestations of his excellences, or to have a more complete fulfilment of the earnest prayer of Moses: "I beseech thee, show me thy glory."* Still further, therefore, to draw the Church of Christ to their coming Saviour, the present course of Lectures has been arranged from different portions of the Epistle to the Hebrews. This masterly work appears to have been St. Paul's last effort for his countrymen. For like their great Lawgiver, Moses, who, before he was called to "sleep with his fathers," wrote the inspired Book of Deuteronomy for the instruction of the children of Israel; so the apostle, not very long before his departure, though the exact time is not known, sent to them from Rome this sublime epistle. It is very instructive to compare these striking portions of Holy Writ together. Both the writers were eminent servants of the Lord, both specially faithful to their Divine Master, and both holding high offices in his service. Both of them were endued with splendid abilities: Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians—St. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught

* Exodus xxxiii. 18.

according to the perfect manner of the fathers, well read also in the literature of the Gentiles. Still further, they were both most affectionately attached to their countrymen,—Moses offering, if the Lord would not forgive their sin, to have himself blotted out of his book; and St. Paul declaring, that he “could wish himself accursed, or separated from Christ, for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh.” Thus equal in their natural and acquired endowments, both also writing under Divine inspiration, if we compare the Book of Deuteronomy with the Epistle to the Hebrews, the comparison will lead us to offer up our devout thanksgivings to the God of all grace, for placing us in that happy age of his Church in which our lot has fallen. For whilst there are strains of eloquence, and prophetic announcements, and views of the character of the Lord Jehovah, and other striking excellences in the Book of Deuteronomy, which may greatly delight and edify the Christian, there wants that which gives so sweet a savour, and such strengthening power, to the Epistle to the Hebrews; that therein is given so glorious a revelation of the Son of God, even of him who, “being the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, after he had

by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"—"the appointed Heir of all things,"—the God-Man, soon to appear on his coming throne,—the "Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec,"—"the Mediator of the new Covenant," having "a kingdom which cannot be moved," and "a throne" which shall abide "for ever and ever."

It is to this sublime Epistle that the Church of Christ is directed in this Seventh Course of Lectures, in which some of the above characters of our Lord, as well as other highly interesting subjects, are unfolded. The title given to the volume is "The Priest on his Throne"—a name and office of our Lord Jesus Christ which richly merits our marked attention in the present eventful crisis.

For when we regard the present aspect of Christendom,—see the uncertain tenure by which so many of the sovereigns of Europe hold their sceptres, how delightful it is to fix our eyes upon Him who has an eternal throne; a throne which, when heaven and earth pass away, shall abide in perfect security through everlasting ages.

How consolatory also is it, at a period when Infidelity is rampant, when so many attempts are made to weaken the authority of that blessed Book which is the Protestant's Charter, and to bring in a spurious divinity, which, if not actually

the offspring of concealed Jesuitism, is closely allied to Popery, and has already drawn over to her ranks some of the professed members of our Church,—in such circumstances how cheering it is to bear in mind, that the Lord Jesus Christ sits as a Priest upon his throne, himself “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners,” and wielding, with truth and meekness, a sceptre of righteousness as the sceptre of his kingdom. So that, whilst we are rejoicing in the stability of his throne, we may be assured that the sceptre in his hands will be a sceptre eminently suited to “the new heavens and new earth in which dwelleth righteousness.”

It is, in some small degree, to prepare the minds of the readers for the high and holy themes which this volume contains, that the writer of this Preface, at the request of his highly esteemed friend, in whose church all these seven courses of Lectures have been delivered, now commits it to the press. Imperfect as it is, and unworthy as he esteems it to appear, as the harbinger of such glorious truths, he cannot but express the pleasure it has given him to prepare it for so interesting a purpose. For he is persuaded that if this volume is attentively read, with earnest prayer for the Divine blessing, it will open the mind and heart to subjects eminently

calculated, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to impart present peace, as well as meetness for everlasting glory. Oh that it may be thus blessed to many! Influenced by this affectionate desire, the writer would humbly beseech the Giver of all good, for his dear Son's sake, to grant that whosoever looks at this volume may have the blessing which every one who looked at the brazen serpent had—"whoever looked at it lived." Not that the writer would in the least degree compare these Lectures, written by men of like passions with himself, with the efficacy of this divinely-appointed ordinance, but because he cannot at present recollect an illustration which more accurately describes his earnest desire for every reader, than that there may not be a single individual who shall peruse this volume, but in the day when the High Priest, sitting on his throne, shall appear, he may see Him "eye to eye," and "face to face," and be made like unto Him, and join with the assembled host of the redeemed in never-ending hallelujahs to God and to the Lamb, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

JAMES HALDANE STEWART.

LAMPSFIELD RECTORY, April 13, 1849.

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LECTURE I.

CHRIST THE HEIR OF ALL THINGS.

BY THE REV. W. R. FREMANTLE,
RECTOR OF CLAYDON, DUCKS.

HEBREWS I. 2.

"Whom He hath appointed Heir of all things."

AGAIN, in the kind providence of God, we are permitted to commence the course of Lectures upon the great subject of unfulfilled prophecy,—and again we would, with increased earnestness, exhort you to lift up your hearts for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, that in these last days He may direct our minds to a full understanding of the signs of the times. The events of the past year claim from us a double measure of patient research and careful study of the word of prophecy. For the tremendous convulsion which

has shaken the whole framework of society throughout Europe—I might almost say throughout the world, has also attracted the attention, the serious attention of all classes, insomuch that politicians, and merchants, and public journalists are compelled to make the concession, that it is hard to deny the fulfilment of prophecy. Let this fact be well observed, and we may be encouraged in all humility to bear our testimony afresh, and exhort you to trim your lamps, and prepare for the coming of the Lord.

The epistle from which my text is taken is well adapted to this purpose, for its general scope is an encouragement to the children of God to persevere unto the end. "Let us hold fast our profession," is the animating exhortation when the apostle has fixed the eye of faith upon the person of Messiah within the vail,—making atonement and intercession for us now, and coming forth as the Everlasting King and Heir of all things hereafter.

And this consideration is the more important, because the Epistle to the Hebrews has been very generally regarded as having reference exclusively to Gospel days, as showing a spiritual fulfilment of the types and shadows of the Mosaic Law, and consequently supplying a standard for the interpretation of the Old Testament, and especially of

the prophetical Scriptures. In this view many appeal triumphantly to the Epistle to the Hebrews as the decisive answer and refutation of every premillenarian argument. This assumption will be found to be altogether groundless, if the line of argument employed by St. Paul throughout the Epistle is carefully observed. *St. Paul is writing to Jews.* He is demonstrating the pre-eminency of Christ over the angels, and over the prophets and priests of the old dispensation. The great proof of superiority lies in the eternal existence of the Son of God. This equally takes the mind back to the eternal beginning, and leads it forward to the eternal consummation of the glory of Christ. The ministry of the prophet and priest on earth forms but a link between the glory that was, and the glory that will be. Hence it is that the apostle in this Epistle affords us a true model for preaching to the Jews. He magnifies the person of Christ as the eternal Son of God. He shows the suffering, and then the glorified Saviour,—first the Redeemer, and then the King. And this will be seen at a glance if we trace the order in which the kingly and prophetic offices are touched in the first four chapters, and the elaborate and weighty demonstrations of His priesthood, which occupy the whole of the six next chapters; all tending to establish the one

great truth that He is a Priest and King for ever. If in chapter v. the Great High Priest is placed before us, He is a Melchizedec—a Priest King; and the second Psalm is quoted to prove his eternal generation. (Ver. 5.) Again, in the seventh chapter, He is within the vail a High Priest ever living to make intercession for us, but “the word of the oath maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore” (ver. 28); and in chapter viii., this High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, is the Mediator of the better covenant, which has a special reference to the house of Israel and the house of Judah; and the period of His delay within the vail is marked in the next chapter, where it is said, “Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation;” and again, chap. x. 37, “Yet a little while He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry;” and chap. xii. 26—28. Now these expressions and allusions are well understood by Jews, better indeed by Jews than by many professing Christians. They know what is meant by the entrance of a living Priest into the holy of holies; and they do not confine their idea of His office to this one act of entering into the holy place, but they look for his return when He comes forth to bless the people. This, then, I take to

be the key to the Epistle. The living person of our Redeemer is now within the veil, but He is coming, and coming shortly (chap. x. 37), to receive His reward and eternal inheritance. Upon this principle I proceed to examine the words of our text, and to consider Jesus as the "appointed Heir of all things."

Let us notice,—

I. His appointment.

II. His title.

III. The extent of His inheritance.

I: The word here used (*εθηκε*) implies a personal act on the part of God, and marks the solemn designation or constitution of Christ to be the heir of all things in His character of Mediator; and this connects Him with the world as the platform of His glory. You will observe that the apostle distinguishes between the eternal generation of the Son, and this appointment to be the Heir. It forms a second step in His advancement and superiority over the angels, for not only has He the pre-eminence as a Son, but by *inheritance* He hath "obtained a more excellent name than they." (Chap. i. 4.) The existence of the Son is wholly of a parental character. It relates to the great mystery of Jehovah himself. The only begotten Son is in the bosom of the Father,—“I and my Father are one.” But the appointment

6 CHRIST THE HEIR OF ALL THINGS.

of the Heir is of a covenant nature, and has reference to others—to the world—to men, and to angels. It is an act of previous counsel and purpose, in one word, of predestination, and therefore looks through all time to the consummation of all things. Thus, when Jehovah originated creation, His infinite mind foreknew redemption, and, providing for its full and final accomplishment, anticipated the glory which should be revealed. Thus, from the very first, yea, from everlasting, or ever the world was, Christ was set up and appointed to be the heir of all things. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." (John i. 1—3.) It is a denial of omniscience if we suppose for a moment that God adapted his work to circumstances as they arose. It was an eternal purpose which He purposed in Himself when He set His love upon the Lamb whom He foreordained before the foundation of the world, and predestinated to the inheritance and the possession which a God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. It was in the fulness of the time appointed of the Father that a virgin conceived and bare a Son; it was by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of

God that Christ was delivered to be slain; and the times and seasons are in the power of the Father, who seeth the end from the beginning, and who "will send Jesus Christ, whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

And now, having all before Him, let us ask, which of all the wondrous projects was nearest to the Divine mind? Was it the making of the world, or the redeeming of the world, or the glorifying of the world? I speak as a man, and with the reverence becoming so awful a subject, when I say, that all these were subservient to the ultimate purpose of the Almighty. He appointed Christ to be the heir of all things; and the creating, redeeming, and glorifying of the world, is all for Christ—for the glory of his person. He is of more worth than a thousand worlds—than all creation. "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another." Greatly does the Psalmist rejoice in this sublime truth, when he sings, "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy

will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." (Psa. lxxxix. 27—29.) In the appointment of the Heir, we see the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the ending of the creation of God. "The counsel of the Lord shall stand, and He will do all His pleasure."

II. We are now to notice His title. And this is one of no small importance. "An heir," the apostle says, "is Lord of all." And this marks,—

1. The glorious pre-eminency of Christ; for there is but one heir, and this not by favour or grace—not by adoption in default of succession, but as the only begotten and eternally appointed heir, he has the right and privilege of exclusive pre-eminence. "He is the beginning of His strength, and the right of the first-born is His." (Deut. xxi. 17.) Hence it is that He is the first-born of every creature. The beginning—the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. He is the Heir of God. He is sole possessor and proprietor of the glory of His Father's house. He has the birth-right—the excellency over all. And this glorious pre-eminence of the Heir displays,—

2. The dignity of His person; for the heir is successor to his father in all that his father hath,

But among men, he has not possession or dominion until the father relinquish or give up his own tenure of it. Thus Jehoshaphat voluntarily abdicated the kingdom in favour of Jehoram, who was his first-born; and Jehoram reigned in his father's stead. (2 Kings viii. 16.) Thus Uzziah was obliged to surrender his kingdom, on account of his leprosy, to the next in succession. (2 Chron. xxvi. 21.) Thus, too, Jehoahaz was deposed by Pharaoh-Necho, and Eliakim was raised to the throne: but Christ is not raised to this dignity through the voluntary, or forced, or necessary surrender of the dominion and majesty of God the Father. He neither can nor will abdicate His supreme jurisdiction and sovereignty. He cannot commit it to one who can be inferior to Him, or to one who can survive Him. There is an equality of dignity between the Father and the Son—a distinction of persons, but unity of essence: "I and my Father are one." (John x. 30.) "I am in the Father, and the Father in me. The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father which dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." "What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise." (John v. 19.) "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that Himself doeth. For as the Father raiseth up the dead,"

and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." The Heir of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God; for when He bringeth in the only-begotten into the world, He saith, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Nor is this all; this dignity is not an abstract or empty quality, but is annexed to,—

3. The actual possession of dominion. And this not as deputy, or viceroy; but as the supreme and rightful Sovereign—the reigning Head over all, angels, authorities, and powers being subject unto Him. "All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth." And this dominion includes the whole empire of Deity; for while we are accustomed to speak of the mediatorial kingdom, and the delivering up of the kingdom by the Son to the Father, yet this no wise interferes with the fact which we assert to be clearly implied in the title of Heir—that Jesus is the "blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords." "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of

gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. i. 8, 9.) "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and every tongue confess Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." And this leads us further to notice,—

4. His eternal existence—the perpetuity of the title. There is no successor after Him: "The Son abideth ever." "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Once heir, always heir—none can interfere with His enjoyment; for it is an eternal inheritance, "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away,"—settled as much in the everlasting covenant before the foundation of the world, as it is destined to continue through the countless ages of eternity. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thou shalt not fail." (Heb. i. 10, 11, 12^d sin, or,

Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.¹¹ But this will be yet more manifest, if we consider,—

III. The extent of his inheritance. And it will not be necessary to enter upon any question as to whether the original word (*παντων*) is in the masculine or neuter gender, whether Christ is appointed heir of all persons or of all things. It may be easily seen from the nature of the appointment and of the title, that the inheritance must include the whole creation of God:—"For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and *for Him*." Who then shall put a limit upon His claim to universality of possession? Truly is it said, "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. He is anointed over all, God blessed for ever."

The extent of Christ's inheritance is commensurate with the universe. Whatever "all things" means, Christ is heir of all; for He is all, and in all. And this is a wide term, for there is a great variety of things in the world; there is a heavenly world and an earthly world. There are righteous men—all sorts of angels and all sorts even thy G. There is Michael, one of the chief

princes, (Dan. x. 13,) the Archangel, (Jude 9,) and Gabriel the angel. There are Jews and Gentiles—all flesh is not the same flesh—for there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds; there are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial,—many nations are to be sprinkled with the blood of atonement and gathered to the Lamb. “All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.” (Ps. lxxxvi. 9.) In every nation there are many tribes, kindreds, and families, for it is written, “In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” (Acts iii. 25.) “Ask of me, and I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” (Ps. ii. 8.) There are sinners of all sorts, ranks, kinds, and degrees, and God will give out of all these classes, one only excepted, a glorious seed to serve Him. And this one class is necessarily excepted because it includes all those who sin the devil’s sin, and are neither in the condition of men or of angels, but who, like their father, are under the curse of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, whose sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment. There is no kind of sin, this only excepted, and no way of sinning, no aggravation of sin, or

continuance in it, even unto an eleventh hour, but there shall be a revenue of glory to Christ. Fools and wise, young and old, despised and honourable, weak and strong, jewels from every region, and precious stones from every land. The infant of days and the sinner a hundred years old, the trembling penitent and the experienced believer, fathers, young men and babes, or, to take the appropriate symbols of St. John (Rev. xxi.), pearls from the depths of guilt, pure gold from the furnace of affliction, jasper bright from the Egyptian desert, and chalcedony, with its cloudy hue, from the cheerless north; the deep emerald from the vein of granite, and the softer chrysolite, found on the superficial sand; the heaven-coloured sapphire and transparent amethyst, all shall shine in the coronet of the hereditary Prince, who, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, will gather together all things in one, both which are on earth and which are in heaven. (Eph. i. 10.) Nor is this all—the whole of lower creation, animate and inanimate, shall be his possession; for it is written, (Psa. lxxv. 3,) “The earth, and all the inhabitants thereof, are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it.” Although the foundations of it are out of course, yet He whose right it is upholds all things by the Word of His power and keeps them in reserve unto the bap-

tial fires of manifested regeneration. The Usurper and his subjects seem to have the ascendancy, the Prince of the power of the air revels in his work of mischief, of storm and tempest, enflaming the passions, and torturing the senses, breeding confusion, hatching the cockatrice egg, filling earth and air with suffering, misery, darkness, and death, so that the earth is filled with violence, and its dark places full of the habitations of cruelty. Hence the whole creation is in labour for a new birth, "groaning and travailing in pain, longing for the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; also the restitution of all things, when the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." When Satan will be bound and Antichrist be cast into the bottomless pit; when the war of the elements against man shall cease, and the very animals be endued with new instinct; when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in, and all Israel be saved; when the Repairer of the breach shall have stopp'd up every gap which sin has made in the visible creation, and one circumference of glory shall concentrate all existence as far, and wider far than the highest intelligence can conceive, whether there be gods many or lords many." (1 Cor. viii. 6.) All power, riches,

wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing, all in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, and in the sea, and all that are in them, from the brightest seraph to the smallest atom, all without exception, without reserve, and without loss, shall be His whom God hath appointed to be heir of all things. (Psa. cxlviii.)

And now let us contemplate the stupendous glory of the Heir. It is the man Christ Jesus,—the Son of man,—the second Adam,—glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.

. Adam was a glorious creature, made in the image and likeness of God: He was made the lord of creation, and had actual possession of all things here below. He was, as one writes, “the herald of God, and had the escutcheon of God upon his breast.” But how soon did he forget his title to the inheritance, and become “a despised, broken idol,—a vessel wherein is no pleasure?” (Jer. xxii. 28.) He sold his birth-right, and lost his blessing. From being great and innocent and happy, he became a miserable outcast amid the ruin which his sin had occasioned; but how different are the prerogatives of the second Adam, the sin-bearing and glory-bringing Saviour! We delight to consider Him in the manger, among the beasts of the field, worshipped by the shepherds and the wise men of

the East. We dwell with comfort on his prayers and tears and temptations, yea, we weep when He weeps, and hide our faces when we think of His baptism of blood and heavy reproaches and dark desertion. The sword of godly sorrow pierces our soul when we stand upon Calvary and hear the exceeding bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was crucified in weakness. He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. These are soul-abasing thoughts,—they concern each of us. He died for me,—He loved me, and gave Himself for me,—and my sin is cancelled, and my hope is secured for happiness beyond the grave. But is this all? Look above the crown of thorns. And whose image and superscription does the cross bear, written out in the language of Jew and Gentile, so that all who run may read: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews!" We are carried at once to the crown of our King. And it is this thought which elevates the mind from a narrow and selfish view of the simple benefit we ourselves obtain from His meritorious cross and passion, to the glory which shall be revealed when the Heir shall enter into the enjoyment of the purchased possession to the praise of His glory. We learn here, that redemption is not for the

glory of man only, but for the glory of God also. This second Adam comes to redeem the forfeited inheritance, and to manifest through eternity the glory of His person and the riches of His Father's house. Oh! what are saints and angels, bright and blessed as they will be, in comparison of Him who is the object of universal admiration! Because He lives, they live; because He reigns, they reign; because He is glorious, they are glorious. And this expounds the vision of the beloved apostle. (Rev. iv. and v.)

Behold Him upon the throne of His glory. The four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before Him, their Creator and King. Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. And the same glorious company sing the new song of Redemption, joined with the voice of many angels, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, said, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

2. Let us realize the fact, that all things and

all events, material and moral, are working together to increase the unsearchable riches of the heir. We admit the difficulty of tracing the mysteries of Providence; we confess our inability to explain how the wrath of man shall conduce to the praise of Him who died for sinners; but of this we are sure, that there is not and never has been an atom in creation, from the sun in the firmament of heaven to the lowly hyssop upon the wall, but it will, in some manner and degree, give its proportion of tribute to swell the praises of our King: "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever." (Rom. xi. 36.) "The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. xvi. 4.) The Almighty Architect made nothing in vain: and Christ is the supreme end and aim of all that is made. What a sanctified and calming light this throws upon all the works of God, all the dispensations of Providence, all the events of nations. Every moment of time, every act of man, every production of art, every discovery of science, every object in nature—every vegetable, mineral, and animal, every rising sun, every waning moon, every river and mountain, every city and every sanctuary, every Sabbath and every ordinance, contributes its quota of praise; and it is no fiction of the

imagination, but a precious and real truth, when the Psalmist invites all things, animate and inanimate, to sing the hallelujah: "Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. . . . Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word: mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: beasts, and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl: kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children." (Psa. cxlviii. 2, 3, 7—12.)*

Let us not fear, although the aspect of things around us is gloomy, and the signs of the times are lowering. We think that all is running into confusion. Kingdoms are overthrown,—Infidelity is rampant,—the waves have lifted up their voice. But the Lord on high is mightier than the waves of many waters. All things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. Let the acute and witty historian confine his picture of men and manners to mere human principles of science, ambition, and heroism, and his eloquent reflec-

* This will illustrate the Canticum in the Liturgy: "Benedicite omnia opera," &c.

tions over the fall of empires, and his elaborate delineations of character, will in a little moment lose their interest, because they lack the element of eternity. History without Christ, the heir of all things, is like the famed river of Palestine,—you follow its course through scenes of thrilling interest, but you pause at the sea of death, where it evaporates in silence and stagnation, because it has no access to the ocean,—it cannot find its legitimate end. Let the politician plan his schemes of national prosperity, and forecast his measures to secure the safety and dominion of the Crown; but if he for a moment forget that he is accumulating for Christ, and laying up treasure for the King of kings, he is destitute of one of the holiest motives which can animate the soul of man in working out the grandest schemes and the highest aims. Let the Rationalist attempt to reduce all truth to the standard of human reason, and in his miserable failure we have the direct proof that Christ is the last as well as the first,—the fulness and fountain of truth, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Without Christ there would be no visible Head of a visible creation; without Christ, the Heir of all things, there would be no rightful proprietor, or King of the new heavens

and the new earth; without Christ, the God-man, there would be no object of universal worship throughout eternity. A redeemed world will sing the praises of its redeeming Lord. All thy works praise thee, O Lord! and thy saints shall bless thee.

3. If such be the glory of the Heir and of His inheritance, let us see what place and portion the children of God will occupy in the glorious consummation.

If any part of creation is precious, how precious must they be whom He has redeemed with His blood, to be a people of inheritance, and His peculiar treasure. Does He not long with unutterable delight for the day when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe? The Lord's portion is His people, and He waits until they all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man,—unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. He is the head of the Church, which is His body,—the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Are souls converted?—He sees of the travail of His soul,—another jewel is added to His crown. Are souls refreshed in the means of grace, comforted under a sermon; strengthened under trial, and sanctified under affliction? Is the Gospel

preached for a witness among all nations, and Churches formed in every land? Are Jews brought to repentance, and the dust of Sion remembered?—this is an addition to His treasure. Every soul and every grace, every work of love, every prayer, every sigh, and every tear, is another stone in the building,—another ornament of beauty cast into the storehouse of the Redeemer's glory. And, oh! with what joy will He receive this inheritance when the time appointed of the Father (Gal. iv. 1, 2, 3) shall arrive, and the minority have expired. “And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” (Mal. iii. 17.) What a glorious manhood,—may I say, what a coming of age,—will this be, when Christ shall have all His fulness, all His body, all His inheritance, fully and entirely united to Him in all its harmony and order,—not a member imperfect, and all grown to their full stature! What a glorious sight, to see, not only the Heir crowned with glory and honour, having all things under His feet,—and how bright is He who is more worth than all besides!—but to see also every member in all the loveliness and comely proportion of every part where there shall not be a saint missing or a grace wanting! And this certainty of possession it is which confirms the

faith of the Church unto the end. The fact that Jesus is the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence, stamps our hope with indelible assurance. The Heir lives, and the inheritance is His. The sons of God are heirs of salvation, heirs of promise, heirs of the kingdom; but how, and upon what plea? They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. They have the right of inheritance in the Elder Brother, who is not ashamed to call them brethren. They have the earnest in their hearts by the seal of the Holy Spirit. They are begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. They have all in Him. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." (1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.) And what a difference is here between the hopes of the world and the hope of the Christian! The one built upon speculations and chances and tottering probability; the other, based upon the Rock of Ages. How often are the men of the world ashamed of their prophecies and mistaken conjectures: they can ridicule the feeble efforts of

those who seek by the light of Scripture to shadow out the dim intimations of coming events; but they are slow to confess the palpable disappointments which their blindness has caused. Oh, that they were wise; that they would look to the end of all existence, and labour for the meat that perisheth not; that so, when the day of redemption arrives, they may be found amongst the number of those to whom Jesus shall say, "Come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!"

LECTURE II.

THE SIMILARITY AND CONTRAST OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS.

BY THE REV. EDWARD AURIOL, M.A.,

RECTOR OF ST DUNSTON'S IN THE WLST.

HEBREWS I. 6.

“ And again, when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

EVERY view which we take of the manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ has its own peculiar beauty. In every part of the revelation of Him who is “ the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person,” we are invited to behold some fresh proof of the dignity of His nature and the excellency of His grace.

This appears to be strikingly illustrated in the commencement of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In the first place, we have brought before us the Son of God whom "He hath appointed heir of all things," speaking as the Prophet to His Church; and in this, undoubtedly, allusion is made to the time of the Saviour's sojourn upon earth, for "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son." Then the apostle refers to His resurrection and ascension, and speaks of the Father's acknowledgment of Him in the words from the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee;" a passage which we find quoted by him in his address at Antioch, as especially applicable to the resurrection of Christ.* And afterwards he proceeds to call attention to a still greater display of majesty and glory in the words of my text, in which he introduces to our notice the second coming of Christ into the world as the next object to be looked for: "When again He brings the first-begotten into the world, He saith, Let all the angels of God worship him;" and with reference to the same glorious period, in the rest of the chapter he quotes various other passages from the Psalms as applicable to the manifestation of Christ on that day.

It is very true that the words which I have

* See Acts xiii. 33.

taken for my text have been otherwise and variously interpreted, but there are several reasons which induce us to concur with those who adopt this view of the subject. In the first place, it is the most natural and obvious reading of the original, as the sentence stands in that language, "When he bringeth again the first-begotten into the world." Secondly, it is that which accords with the meaning of the word *οικουμενη*, which we render—the world: an expression which applies to this world in which we live. Thirdly, this reading gives its proper future sense to the word, *He bringeth in*, and more especially, it is in exact accordance with the scope of the whole ninety-seventh Psalm, from the Septuagint translation of which, as it is generally admitted, the words of my text are quoted. This Psalm evidently relates to the Lord's glorious reign. It begins with the statement, "The Lord reigneth;" it tells us of His manifestation in flaming fire for the destruction of His enemies, just as we read in the Second Thessalonians, that "He shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." It speaks of all people seeing His glory, just as we find it written in the book of Revelation, that when "He cometh in clouds every eye shall see

Him." It foretels the destruction of idolatry, according to the second chapter of Isaiah, and the establishment and joy of His ancient people, "Zion heard of it, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord;" and this reminds us of the prophecy of Jeremiah, "I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth: in His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."

At the close of the Psalm we have an assurance of the salvation of the saints, and it concludes with the encouraging and animating declaration, which is full of instruction, as it respects the waiting for that day,—“Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart;” just as St. Paul calls upon us to “rejoice in the Lord always,” because “the Lord is at hand:” so entirely does this view of the subject accord with the scope of that portion of Scripture from which this address to the angels is quoted.

But I need not dwell further on the meaning of this Psalm, because it was fully discussed in one of the last year's course of Lectures.* We must remember, however, brethren, that this great

* Glimpses of Messiah's Glory. Lecture VI.

doctrine which we are considering does not rest on this, or any single passage of Scripture, or any particular interpretation of some isolated portion. It is a truth which is brought out from many clear and plain statements contained in God's Word, and therefore we believe, in adopting this interpretation, we are only following out the analogy of Scripture according to the mind of the Holy Spirit, and that the thoughts which it suggests, concerning the similarity and contrast of the first and second coming of the Lord, legitimately arise from the real meaning of the text.

Let me, then, according to the subject proposed for our consideration,—

First, Direct your attention to this similarity and contrast; and,

Secondly, To some useful inferences, which may, I trust, with God's blessing, be drawn from it; and may the Holy Spirit incline our hearts to receive His blessed word!

In the first place, the subject brings before us the whole of the glorious dispensation of God's covenant mercy, as carried out in the gift and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, His blessed Son; and in considering the points of similarity between the first and second coming of the Son of God, we may notice it as illustrated, first of all, in the clear and plain fulfilment of prophecy. It is

universally admitted with regard to the prophecies which relate to the first advent, that the fulfilment of them has been strictly literal. The time of that event was clearly pointed out at the close of the seventy weeks foretold by Daniel, ere yet the sceptre had entirely departed from Judah, and while the temple, which was begun in the days of Ezra, was still standing. The exact place of the birth of the Messiah was foretold by Micah; and the wonderful direction of Providence brought about the fulfilment of his word at such a time, and in such a manner, as to attract the attention of all to the literal accomplishment of this prophecy. The circumstance of the Saviour's birth as the child of the virgin is scarcely less wonderful, as fulfilling to the letter a prophecy concerning Him recorded 700 years before, than it is from the miraculous nature of the event itself. The mode of His manifestation as the King of the Jews, on the occasion of His humble triumph when riding into Jerusalem, and every particular respecting His sufferings and death, are recorded with a remarkable precision in the prophetic Scriptures, and are pointed out by the inspired historians as distinctly accomplished in Him, so as especially to direct our attention to the literal fulfilment of the writings of the prophets. But we meet with an exact counterpart to this in those portions of the

same writings which we cannot but refer to the second advent of the Lord, in which we find the same character of minuteness of detail. Thus the time of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ is declared in prophecy in the visions which we find in the book of Daniel, pointing out that it must be during the existence of the Roman empire in its divided state (Dan. ii. 44, 45); that it must be whilst the little horn, the Antichristian power, is still making war with the saints and prevailing against them. (Dan. vii. 21, 22.) The place of the manifestation of Messiah's glory is distinctly declared to be Mount Zion. It is written most plainly that His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. (Zech. xii. 2.) His manifestation is declared to be at the time when the opposing nations shall come up to fight against Jerusalem. (Zech. xii. 9.) The glory and extent and blessed character of the kingdom are set forth in the most glowing colours in the Old Testament, whilst in the New we have the second personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to destroy Antichrist, and to judge the world in righteousness, most distinctly and continually represented as the object of the Church's hope and expectation. Now let it be remembered that these several things are equally written in the Word of Him to whom all things are known from the beginning, and that,

without the smallest intimation that in this respect we are at all to look for anything like a contrast between what relates to the first coming and what refers to the second advent of our Lord. Had we lived before the coming of Christ, should we have been able, for instance, to have selected that prophecy which tells us of His birth at Bethlehem, and to have said, "This will certainly be fulfilled literally," whilst, with respect to that which tells us that "the Lord shall reign in Mount Zion and before His ancients gloriously," we should have come to the conclusion that it should only have a figurative interpretation; or should we have said concerning His being meek, and riding upon an ass, "This will actually take place?" but concerning that which declares, that "His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives," that can only admit of some figurative sense? As, therefore, we have seen the one series of prophecies actually and exactly accomplished, with what reason can we now assert that some so-called spiritual meaning must be attached to the others? The most natural conclusion for us to draw must surely be, that if the prophecies, which relate to events occurring in the course of time, have certainly had a plain and a literal fulfilment, perhaps far beyond what we might have had reason to expect, those which

relate to the winding up of the dispensation, when all the counsel of God shall be accomplished, are still more to be expected to be literally fulfilled. I know that this subject has been repeatedly urged on former occasions, and in former courses of lectures, but it is so obviously comprised in any view which we take of the similarity between the Lord's advents, that I trust I may be excused for urging arguments often pressed before, and as long as there are those who still explain away the prophecies which relate to the personal reign of Messiah over the earth, and the visible glory of His kingdom at Jerusalem, we cannot too often direct your attention to this important point. For if, with reason, we object to the hardness of heart of the Jews in refusing to believe, when their own Scriptures have been literally fulfilled, how is it consistent in us to reject the expectation of the same literal fulfilment of those passages, which relate to the glories of Messiah as seated on the throne of His father David, however hard it may seem to our poor weak reasoning to expect such a fulfilment, and however impossible to reconcile such an expectation with our own pre-conceived opinions on the subject.

In proceeding to consider the similarity between the two advents of the Lord, we are struck with the statement that "the Father will bring again

the first-begotten into the world." It is not only declared that the Son will come a second time, but it is also said to be the act of the Father, bringing Him again into His world, and commanding all His angels to worship Him. And this is entirely in conformity with the whole plan and economy of God's work of redemption. In it we behold "the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;" the whole from the beginning wrought in Christ. When He is spoken of in connexion with His first coming, it is as the Sent of the Father. He represents Himself while upon earth as one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world. The subject brought before us in the first Lecture of this course was the *appointment* of the Father; that which we are now considering is the carrying out of His purpose in the Son. And let us not look upon this as a mere matter of speculation. It sets forth to us a most glorious practical truth. It brings before us the character of the God with whom we have to do, as that gracious Being, who first from eternity prepared and appointed for His own glory the plan of our salvation, and has carried it out, and completes it in the whole dispensation of the Gospel of His Son. Thus, in the language of prophecy, the Messiah is described as endowed with the Spirit, and sent

to "bind up the broken-hearted." (Isa. lxi. 1.) He applied to Himself the description, "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." (Isa. l. 5.) The Father directs attention to Him in the words, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." (Isa. xlii. 1.) And, again, He says, (Isa. xlix. 6,) "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Judah, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou shouldest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth." And when St. Peter, at the Pentecostal period, speaks, certainly of the second advent, he says, "And God shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts iii. 20, 21.)

The subject, then, which we are contemplating, is the glorious consummation, the dispensation of the *fulness of times*, as contrasted with the expression the *fulness of time*, used in Gal. iv., with reference to His being sent the first time into the world. It is the winding up, as it were, of the great scheme of Divine grace, when "He shall gather together in, one all things in Christ, both

which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him;" and this is the chief point of similarity, that in each of these events we behold the carrying out to its perfection the Divine counsel of love from the beginning, of love towards man in the only-begotten Son of God, the only source of peace, the only medium of communication between a holy God and a fallen world, the only means of recovery for those whom sin and departure from God had for ever ruined. "The things concerning me," said Christ, "have an end;" but that end will not be until the whole series of prophecies shall have passed into the mighty events of which they have foretold.

In contemplating, therefore, this unity of object as combining the view of both the advents of Christ, surely the one must not be lost sight of in the other! The charge brought against those who look for the personal return of their Lord as the one object of the believer's hope, that their attention is removed by it from the view of Christ crucified, is, or at least ought to be, entirely unfounded. None ought to take a deeper interest in the work accomplished on the cross than those who look for the coming of Christ to take possession of the throne; the one leads to the other. It is the consequence of the other, as declared in the prophecy of Isaiah, where it is written:

“When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.” (Isa. liii. 10—12.) It is by His having triumphed on the cross, by His having “spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it;” it is by His having led captivity captive, and ascended into the heavens, that He is preparing for the completion of His redemption work in the Father’s bringing Him again the second time into the world; and therefore, those who look forward to His coming should be just they who can most rejoice in His cross, who most delight to contemplate Him as “the Lamb as it were slain.”

The similarity of the two advents, therefore, really proceeds from the fact of the unity of the object accomplished by the Son of God. The contrast, of which we are now about to speak, arises from the circumstances necessarily attendant on the carrying out of that object. In the salvation of man He must first appear as his Repre-

sentative, as the sin-bearer, to suffer the penalty and to undergo the curse which sin has brought into the world. In his second coming, He is to appear "without sin unto salvation." This is the ground of the contrast, and the completeness of it shows how perfectly the whole work has been accomplished, how entirely we may look to Jesus as a perfect Saviour.

If, then, we enter into some particulars of this contrast, we may notice, in the first coming, the entire subjection of the Divine Redeemer; in the second coming, His perfect victory, and His glorious manifestation as King of kings and Lord of lords. He first appears to perform the work of salvation by His own sufferings and obedience unto death; He comes again to complete that work, by the bringing in all His people to rejoice in the establishment of His kingdom.

The characteristics of His first coming, as it has been well observed, are, grace and salvation; of His second, righteousness and judgment.* Just as He says, concerning the former: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved;" whereas of the latter, it is affirmed, "He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He

* Bickersteth on the Prophecies.

hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He raised Him from the dead." When coming into the world for sin, we behold Him in all the helplessness of infancy, born of a woman, made under the law; when coming into the world the second time, we see Him in His own glory as well as of the Father, and with the holy angels. When the Father brought the first-begotten into the world the first time, "He was despised and rejected of men; they hid, as it were, their faces from Him; they saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him." A few only were witnesses of His walk and works, and of those who acknowledged Him in His true character, He declared, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but my Father which is in heaven." When He shall return, "Behold! He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him!" All shall be constrained to acknowledge Him, and to fall down before Him. He was born of the house and lineage of David, but He sprang forth "as a root out of a dry ground,"—the family had fallen into poverty and neglect. How different will it be when the prophecy delivered to his Virgin mother shall be accomplished! In the days of His flesh He sojourned with His parents, and was subject to them, being, as it was supposed, the carpenter's

son. He has never reigned on David's throne, however true it may be, and however blessed is that truth, that He does now rule over the hearts of His people; and in this respect therefore, in all the difference between the manger and the Royal seat, the carpenter's son and the King over the house of Israel for ever, we behold a marked and decided contrast.

But we may also observe this contrast in the treatment which our blessed Lord met with from those by whom He was surrounded. When we look at the suffering Saviour, we behold one who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; and who were the instruments of inflicting these sufferings? They were His own sinful creatures. It was their hour and the power of darkness, and being "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, they took Him, and by wicked hands crucified and slew Him." When He comes again, it will be in power and with great glory, and "they also which pierced Him shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him."

But my text introduces another topic, viz., the ministration of angels on that day; and here we behold a remarkable contrast. Angels are commanded by God to worship Him. They have

doubtless from the very first adored Him continually as their Creator; for "by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." As the eternal God, and their Creator and Preserver, they have never ceased worshipping him: but now that they are especially commanded to worship Him, it must be in a new character. It must be in that character which He shall assume when, having made all His enemies His footstool, and descending from His seat at the Father's right hand, He shall establish on the renewed earth His Mediatorial throne. At His first coming, indeed, angels were employed as messengers to men, to bear to them the glad tidings in which all were interested. Angels were used as instruments of consolation to the Lord in His suffering human nature, but we read not on any occasion then of the angels worshipping Him. We are not told of the heavenly host going with the shepherds to Bethlehem; they sent them thither, but it was not yet their time to worship. And what is the nature of the worship which they will hereafter offer? The vision of Isaiah may assist us in answering the

question. They shall worship Him as Jehovah, the holy, holy, holy Lord of Hosts; for we are expressly told, that "these things spake Esaias when he saw His glory and spake of Him." They shall receive direct commandments from Him, and shall be at liberty to fly forth to execute those commands. When He was upon earth in His humiliation, they were restrained from doing Him service: He tells us that He might have prayed the Father, and straightway He would have sent more than twelve legions of angels, to fight for Him, that He might not be delivered into the hands of His enemies; but how then, He asks, should the Scriptures be fulfilled? At His second coming into the world, in strict accordance with this declaration of Scripture, we find special duties assigned to them: "He shall send forth His angels to bind in bundles the tares,"—"to gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity,"—"to gather together His elect from the four corners of the earth." They shall worship Him, for they have a particular interest in what they shall then behold. It will be over fallen angels that Messiah will then triumph. It is remarkable, that the occasion on which we read of their ministering to Him when on earth, was after His successful resistance of the temptations of Satan (Matt. iv. 11); and it

shall be when Satan shall be bound at the second coming of the Son of God that all the angels shall worship Him. The scene of this worship, the text tells us, will be *the world*, into which Christ is brought; it will not be heaven, nor the air, but the earth; and in Isaiah's vision the place where he beheld the worship of the seraphim was the temple, upon which the glory of the Lord visibly descended. "And I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple." (Isa. vi, 1.) And there is a peculiar suitableness in this. The world, which was the scene of Satan's triumph, shall be that of his overthrow; the earth, on which angels beheld and wondered at the bitter agonies and sufferings of the Prince of Life, shall be the place where they shall acknowledge His Divine glory. That very spot where "He who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," "was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," shall be the place where "every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

For once more: consider the contrast in the number and character of those attendants who waited on Him at His first coming, and those who shall greet Him at His second appearing. A

~~the~~ shepherds, the wise men led by the star from the east, Simeon, Anna, and some others, probably, who waited for His consolation, were privileged to acknowledge Him as a "light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel." But "Behold, the Lord cometh, and all His saints with Him." "When he bringeth the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let ALL the angels of God worship Him." Oh! what a countless multitude must be there! Daniel describes them when he says, "Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and thousand times ten thousand stood before Him." Our Lord speaks of His coming with all His holy angels. Oh! if you remember, too, that them which sleep in Jesus God will bring with Him; that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the dead in Christ shall be raised, and we that are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air; what a noble, glorious company that will be! What a wonderful thought! It shall be the same Jesus, who was once brought as a little babe into the temple, to do with Him after the manner of the Jews, who shall be so accompanied, so glorified! Oh! is not His humiliation a way to a glorious throne?

My brethren, having now laid the subject

before you, we will proceed to point out some practical inferences which may be drawn from it, and which, I trust, the blessed Spirit may apply to our hearts according to our various necessities and circumstances.

And, first, we may notice the shame and utter confusion of face of those who, neglecting the plain Word of God, have refused to receive Christ as the true God, the one Mediator, the Divine Saviour. What an awful sight will this be for those who have denied His Godhead! When angels shall be seen to worship Him at the command of His Heavenly Father, who can doubt that He whom they adore is truly and really God? How can such beings be guilty of worshipping the creature? still less can they be guilty of such idolatry in obedience to the command of God. Let the plain declarations of Scripture, and the hope that we, dear brethren, shall behold this glorious sight, confirm our strong faith in the essential Godhead of that Saviour in whom we trust and whom we love. Or, again, how shall the Papists, who have encouraged the worship of angels and saints and other mediators, answer for their sinful presumption in having turned away the regard of millions from that only "name under heaven given amongst men whereby they must be saved?" The words addressed to St.

John when he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed him these things, will be fully illustrated: "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them who keep the sayings of this book. Worship God." (Rev. xxii. 9.) Yes, angels themselves will take their place as fellow-servants and fellow-worshippers with the saints to acknowledge the Divine glory of the one only Mediator. What is that but spiritual adultery which characterizes the harlot of Babylon, and identifies her with the Church of Rome, as evidenced by her prayers to the Virgin, and to saints, and her reliance on their intercession and good works, instead of entire dependance on the all-sufficient merits of the Son of God! And what a sight will this be for those who have treated the Gospel as a mere myth, and its essential doctrines, and the facts recorded in it, as an erroneous popular form of belief, as though we were following "cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!" This will then be seen to be a FACT, that the angels will obey the command of their God, and will worship Christ, who has "by himself purged our sins," who has "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," who shall again be brought in as the first-begotten

into the world, and whose "throne, as God, is for ever and ever, and who is the same, and his years shall not fail."

2. But again: remark, brethren, the great and glorious things which they who now have believed on Him by the means of the preaching of His Gospel, and the blessing of the Holy Spirit, shall then behold. To these we may apply our Saviour's words to Nathaniel: "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Now, indeed, the believer is permitted to enjoy communion with his God, to believe that he has heaven open for him, and freedom given him to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; but then he shall actually see the heaven open. What may be the nature of the Divine glory which shall be manifested on the renewed earth, or how the blessed Saviour may have connected the declaration with the confession of Nathaniel, "Thou art the King of Israel," (John i. 49,)—what part the risen saints may then take with the angels in their communications with the earth, on which will dwell righteousness and peace, we will not attempt to say. All these

things belong to an hereafter. But ought not that hercafter to be an object of hope? and ought not present faith to be strengthened, and patient obedience to the will of God to be encouraged, by the expectation that “when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is;” that “we shall see the King in His beauty;” that if His coming with His saints will introduce His millennial kingdom with all its glories and blessedness, then, if we are His saints indeed, we ourselves shall be witnesses of that glory,—we shall have our portion in the administration of the affairs of that blessed kingdom. “Know ye not,” says the apostle, “that we shall judge angels?”

3. But in considering the similarity and the contrast between the first and second coming of the Son of God, we may remark, also, its admirable bearing upon the present experience of God’s tried servants.

How suitable to the wants and circumstances of the children of God, is the view which we have been endeavouring to give of the unity of design in that dispensation which embraces the sufferings and the kingdom of Christ; and, at the same time, of the contrast between those sufferings and the glory to be revealed! How exactly does this accord with the experience of the true

servants of Christ. In the unity of design carried out in all that he believes of his Saviour's work, he finds that on which his soul rests its entire dependance for present acceptance, for peace with God, for security and defence against all his spiritual enemies, from whence it derives all its hopes for everlasting glory. But in the contrast of what his Saviour endured, with what his Saviour shall be when He shall come a second time into the world, he beholds that which makes such a Saviour most suitable to the nature of his own experience. The servant of God feels his need not only of a powerful and glorified Lord, but of a tender, and gracious, and sympathizing Friend; and such has our covenant-keeping God provided in Him whom He sent into the world to suffer and to die. In the same Epistle which speaks so clearly of the glory of the Godhead of the Son, we are informed, that "in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a faithful high priest in things relating to God. . . . For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Do we know what it is to go to Him when we are tempted, and to look to Him for sympathy in times of trouble? Then, assuredly, we understand the suitability to ourselves of all that pertains to His first

coming in humiliation. Nor is this all. That which concerns the Saviour concerns us too, as members of Him. We look through Him for the same kind of contrast for ourselves. "As He is, so are we in this world." "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." The Book of the Revelation, which contains the most glowing statements of the hopes and prospects of the Church at her Saviour's coming, is addressed by St. John to his "brethren and companions in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. i. 9); and what an animating motive is the realizing this contrast! St. Paul speaks of it as influencing the Saviour Himself, "*who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame.*" (Heb. xii.) "I reckon," he says, "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. viii. 18.) He describes himself as "suffering the loss of all things, that he may know Him, and the power of His resurrection (Phil. iii.); the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Is there not a blessed contrast set before us in this experience? Oh, what a support to faith! what an encouragement to hope! The Re-

deemer whom we expect will come: "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come." He will be brought again into the world, and all His saints with him; and then "they that have suffered with him shall be glorified together."

4. And, lastly, my brethren, at that great day all the angels of God shall worship Him. Are we inclined to ask, "And what are these angels doing now?" The same Scripture informs us, they are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation." And if this be *their* office and *their* work, may we not further ask, What should the "HEIRS OF SALVATION" be doing? They should be manifesting that they are really heirs of salvation; they should worship Christ in spirit now, as they look forward to join in that pure worship which the angels of God are commanded to render to Him at His coming again; they should be striving to "walk worthy of Him who has called us to His kingdom and glory;" they should not be ashamed to bear His cross, to be conformed to His image,—if needs be, to endure His reproach. In how solemn a manner does the apostle enjoin upon Timothy the faithful discharge of his duties as a minister of Christ! "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and

dead at His appearing and His kingdom." (2 Tim. iv. 1.) And again: "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels." (1 Tim. v. 21.) Oh, my brethren, is it indeed so with us! Are we thus proving that we believe on Him, that we look for Him, that we expect His coming? Let me remind you of His own words, to be fulfilled literally in that day to which my text alludes: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God."

LECTURE III.

THE GOD-MAN ON HIS COMING THRONE.
ANOINTED FOR HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS WITH
THE OIL OF GLADNESS.

BY THE REV JAMES HALDANE STEWART, M.A.,

RECTOR OF LIMPSPICID, SURRY

HEBREWS I 8, 9.

*"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is
for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is
the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved
righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God,
even thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil
of gladness above thy fellows."*

THESE words are taken from an Epistle which may be called the last effort of the Apostle St. Paul to save his countrymen. He had manifested his deep concern in their welfare, and his great heaviness and continued sorrow of heart at their

national unbelief. This concern had also been testified by his "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel that they might be saved." It had been still further shown by his frequent reasonings with them, "persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening." All this zeal on their behalf was, however, unavailing. As the prophet Isaiah had foretold, "their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes they had closed, lest they should be converted, and the Lord should heal them."

Still, such was the Apostle's ardent affection for his countrymen that by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as a last effort, he wrote this masterly Epistle. Knowing also that the turning-point on their salvation was their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, the great object at which he aimed in the Epistle was to give such a view of the person of our blessed Lord, as might convince them that the Gospel dispensation far, yea, very far, exceeded that of Moses. Fully aware, however, of their prejudices against the very name of our Saviour,—a name which is to us, my beloved friends, the dearest of all names; for his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins,—he does not commence this Epistle in the manner in which he generally

writes to the Gentiles, by calling himself the servant of Jesus Christ, but opens his subject by one of the most glorious descriptions of our ever-to-be-adored Lord which is to be found in the inspired volume; a description which, if truly received by faith, must, by the divine blessing, fix the soul upon him as an almighty, all-willing, and all-sufficient Saviour;—a description, therefore, which, though written at first to remove the unbelief of the unconverted Jews, and confirm the confidence of the believing seed of Abraham, is equally important to us Gentiles, especially to those who are “looking for, and hasting to, the coming of the day of God”—or to that glorious morning—when the shout shall be heard from heaven, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.” This is the sublime sentence with which the apostle commences the Epistle:—“God,” he says, “who at sundry times and in divers manners hath spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself

purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." *

If, at your leisure, my beloved friends, you meditate upon this sentence, you will see, whilst the language is most sublime, that it presents a truly magnificent description of our Lord. For contemplate what it declares our Lord Jesus Christ to be; the appointed Heir of all things, the Creator of the universe, the outshining of the glory of the invisible God, the manifester of his excellences as the express image of his person, and the upholder of all things by the mere word of his power. Such being the character he sustained for a season upon earth, when he had finished the work the Father had given him to do, namely, to purge our sins by his own blood, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Whilst the apostle thus indirectly shows the eternal Deity and Godhead of Christ,—for who but He, who was one in essence with the Father, could be *his Son*, or be the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; or who but such a being could be the Maker of the world and the upholder of all things by his mere word?—Whilst, I say, the apostle thus indirectly

* Hebrews i. 1—3.

shows the eternal Deity and Godhead of Christ, his direct object is to prove his superiority to the angels. For, knowing the high opinion in which his countrymen held their lawgiver, had he at once attempted to prove our Lord's superiority to Moses, their strong prepossessions in his favour would have prevented their listening to his arguments. With that wisdom, therefore, which was given to him by the Spirit of Wisdom, he begins by showing by proofs taken from their own Scriptures our Lord's superiority to the angels, which, when once established, he could with greater ease convince them of his superiority to Moses.

To prove, therefore, his superiority to the angels, he quotes different passages from the Psalms of David, in which the glories of Messiah are predicted; among others, the passage which I have read as my text, in which our blessed Lord appears as the "God-man upon his coming Throne, anointed for his righteousness with the oil of gladness."

It is upon this exalted subject that your beloved minister has requested me to address you this evening. This office he has probably assigned to me from my having had the privilege of addressing a discourse to you, founded upon the 45th Psalm, last spring, when a similar

course of Lectures to the present was delivered. For upon that occasion I purposely avoided entering into the portion of the Psalm which I have now to bring before you, feeling that the subject then assigned to me, namely, the triumph of the King and his glorious Espousals, required all the time that could be conveniently allotted for its consideration.

I would now, therefore, renew the request I then made, that you would kindly favour me with your secret but fervent prayers for the special aid of the Holy Spirit, that He may, in his condescending goodness, so accompany the word with his divine power and unction, that in the day when the God-man shall appear on his glorious throne, anointed with the oil of gladness, this lecture may be found to have been, in some measure, instrumental in placing many of you, my beloved friends, amongst that blessed company who shall stand before the throne.

Oh that God the Holy Ghost might thus be with us—that there might not be one individual in this large assembly but who should receive a blessing!

Allow me again to read my text to you, with the preceding verse, which is connected with it. Of the angels he saith, (that is, the inspired writer of the Psalm from whence the passage is taken,

saith,) "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire; but of the Son he saith, (that is, the inspired writer of the 45th Psalm saith,) Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

The whole of this sublime passage, as it stands in the 45th Psalm, may be considered as a joyful exclamation, or ascription of admiring praise and devout thanksgiving of the inspired writer, upon beholding with his prophetic eye the triumph of the King. For if you refer to the preceding verses of the 45th Psalm you will see that my text follows a prophetic statement of Messiah's victory over his enemies. The inspired writer had given him this charge: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of the truth, and meekness, and righteousness." Then predicting Messiah's triumph, he says, "Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible," or, as it might be rendered, 'wonderful,' "things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee;" —that is, whereby, not as at present, when "one of

a city, or two of a family," are converted to the faith of Christ, but when the peoples, in the plural number, as it is in the original, or the Gentile nations, fall under thee. This will be the case when the Lord brings on the glorious times mentioned by the prophets, and especially by the Prophet Zechariah, in that striking verse, "The Lord shall be king over all the earth, and in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." *

The prophet with joyful eyes, beholding this universal conquest, sees that glorious event, for which it may be said all creation travails, when the Son of God shall take possession of his glorious throne.

Seeing him seated there, with sovereign authority, and in perfect security, he breaks out, as I have said, in a rapturous ascription of admiring praise, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." To this striking declaration of the eternity of his kingdom, and the peaceableness of his rule, he adds this pleasing statement of his inward excellence, and his glorious reward, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

But, that we may more readily enter into the spirit

of the writer, and receive the edification which this wonderful passage of Scripture is so calculated to give, let us consider it more in detail."

And first, let us, my beloved friends, with the eye of faith regard **THE PERSON** the Psalmist addresses,—“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” The person here addressed as God, can be no other than the co-equal and co-eternal Son of God—the God-man, Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour.” For if you refer to the Psalm you will see that the same Person whom the inspired writer addresses in my text as God, he addresses in the preceding verses as Man. Thus he says, “Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured upon thy lips, therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.” And again, “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty,”—words very suitable to be addressed to our Lord in his human nature, but which would be quite irrelevant, did he not in his person unite both natures—the human and divine—or was he not “perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.”*

This title, therefore, “O God,” merits our closest attention. For whilst it assures us of our Lord’s Deity and eternal Godhead, giving an efficacy to all he did and suffered, it establishes

* See the Creed of St. Athanasius.

this very important point, the full and complete reconciliation of God to man; yea, more than this, his delight in Him.

For whilst Adam, for his transgression, was driven out from paradise, and he and his whole race became subject to the curse denounced upon sin, "Dying, thou shalt die," now so completely satisfied is the 'Lord Jehovah' with the passive obedience of our Lord in his death and sufferings, and with his active obedience in fulfilling all righteousness, that he receives him, "who is made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law," to a seat at his right hand upon his throne—yea, gives him a throne of his own—on which he sits as the God-man.

For let it ever be remembered that his human nature, though glorified, is still the same. For while sitting on his throne, possessing all the attributes of Deity, "He is not ashamed to call his people brethren;" but, as when he ascended to heaven, he said to his disciples, "I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God;" so when he appears on his throne of glory, he says to those whom he places on his right hand: "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it to me."

Oh, my beloved friends, how strengthening to the faith, and how establishing to the soul, is this blessed truth !

Why should we fear to approach the throne of grace, when He who sits there sits with a human soul,—perfectly “ holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners,” but still with a human soul, “ bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh,”—like to us in all things, sin only excepted ?

For surely, if the Lord Jehovah is so satisfied with the work his beloved Son has accomplished, that he willingly admits him to sit down at his right hand, although he is so closely united to man as to be “ the man Christ Jesus,” then we may be assured of his willingness to receive those he presents in robes made white in his precious blood, and made comely through the righteousness He has put upon them. Yea, why should we not continually rejoice, seeing that He who is coming to judge the world in righteousness, and to assign to each the station he is to occupy throughout eternity, comes clothed in our nature, a nature in which he will abide for ever and ever.

Oh that He, who is the Author and Finisher of faith, would thus strengthen our belief, and enable us to go on our way rejoicing in the Lord !

But having brought before you the Person mentioned in my text, let me now call your attention,

Secondly, TO HIS EXALTATION. This is made known to us by these marks of royalty,—His throne and his sceptre. These are the words: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a righteous sceptre.”

We know that to be in the quiet possession of the throne is one of the most distinguishing marks of royalty; that if ever a sovereign appears exalted above his subjects, it is when he meets them on his throne. It is related of King Herod, that when he would appear in peculiar splendour before his subjects, “Upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration to them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a man.” We know also, that when our gracious Queen, whom the Lord long preserve in health and peace, especially appears as the Sovereign of the British Isles, it is when, seated upon her throne, Her Majesty is surrounded by her nobles, her officers of State, her privy councillors, and the representatives of the commonalty of the land.

Our blessed Lord also, when he would reveal his majesty to the Prophet Isaiah, thus appeared to him: “I saw also the Lord sitting upon a

throne, high, and lifted up, and his train filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphim. Each one had six wings: with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly: and one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." Such, you observe, was the majestic grandeur of his appearance when seated upon his throne, that the Seraphim, the most exalted of the heavenly host,—those elect angels, who are called Seraphim, because they burn, with such ardent love to their Lord, covered their faces with their wings. As if his splendour, when seated upon his high and lifted up throne, was so dazzling as to overpower even these glorious angels, of one of whom, or of one of the angels, it is said, that "he came down from heaven with great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory."

Such was the majesty of our Lord's throne, when only beheld in a vision! What, then, will be its glory when he appears in reality,—comes attended by ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels! And these, as with one loud voice, proclaiming, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." Imagination is lost in the splen-

dour of the scene ; and yet, my beloved friends, as surely as we are now assembled in his name in this house of prayer, so surely will our Lord thus appear ; and “ every eye shall see him, and they also that have pierced him.”

They shall see him also, not as earthly sovereigns are now beheld, sitting upon their thrones upon special State occasions. But “ thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” The dazzling glory by which thou art surrounded will continue when the lustre of the sun, of the stars, and of all the firmament of heaven has fled away, and no place is found for them. Then, O God, “ thy throne will abide for ever and ever.”

Allow your minds for a moment to dwell upon this exalted subject. When Moses blessed the children of Israel, speaking of their high privileges, he says : “ There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. . . . The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” Here you observe, that their high privilege consisted in the eternity of God, that the ETERNAL GOD was their refuge, and that underneath were THE EVERLASTING ARMS. And this, my beloved friends, forms a part of our blessed hope,—that the throne of our

coming King is an eternal throne. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

We have a striking description of the fading, transitory nature of the thrones of the greatest earthly monarchs, given by the Prophet Isaiah, when, addressing the house of Israel, he thus writes, foretelling the fall of Babylon: "It shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. The grave from beneath is moved to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak, and say unto thee, Art thou become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee."*

Thus transient is the throne of the proud king of Babylon, equally short-lived is that of every earthly monarch: like the image of Nebuchadnezzar, "the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver,

* Isa., xiv. 8—11.

and the gold, are all broken together, and become like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; the wind carries them away, and no place is found for them."*

So great is the contrast between every earthly throne and that of our coming King! These are all broken in pieces, and consume away, like the chaff of summer: but "thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever!"

Oh! may the Glorifier of Christ enable us, my Christian friends, to realize this blessed truth, and more than ever to praise that sovereign grace which has chosen us for his servants! and enable us, with more determined courage, to maintain his cause, remembering his gracious promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne!"†

I must pass, however, to the other mark my text gives of the exaltation of the God-man, namely, the *sceptre* he holds, which is thus mentioned: "The sceptre of thy kingdom is a righteous sceptre."

The sceptre is another of the distinguishing ensigns of royalty. It was particularly so among the Eastern monarchs. They held in their hand a golden sceptre, as is mentioned of king Aha-

* Dan. ii. 35.

† Rev. iii. 21.

suerus, and no one was at liberty to approach them till this golden sceptre was held out.* Whilst it was an emblem of the authority of the king, it was also emblematical of his government, or of the laws by which he ruled his subjects. When seated upon his throne, therefore, the inspired prophet sees the God-man, having a sceptre. As his throne, however, is in entire contrast to those of earthly sovereigns, their thrones passing away as the shadow, but his enduring for ever and ever, so with their sceptres. For however mild and gentle the government of any earthly sovereign may have been, there is none of the sons of men who can be said to have ruled with a perfectly straight sceptre. Either their power, or their wills, have been so affected by the circumstances in which they have been placed, that their sceptres have been bent by expediency, instead of being kept straight by the eternal principles of truth and goodness.

Far different is the sceptre of our coming King. His is "a sceptre of righteousness,"—a sceptre which, the more closely it is examined, the more consistent it will be seen with justice and equity. What a perfect rule, my beloved friends, is the one laid down by our Lord for the government of his disciples: "As ye would that men should do

* Esther iv. 11.

unto you, do ye also unto them likewise." And so the new commandment he gave to them: "That ye love one another as I have loved you; that ye also love one another." If only these two commands, put forth, as it might be said, from the top of his golden sceptre, were universally obeyed, what a wonderful effect would it have upon the inhabitants of this earth! If men only considered what they would desire, placing themselves in the circumstances of those with whom they dealt, and act upon this principle, how completely would it extinguish that spirit of selfishness which now too much prevails,—that desire to overreach, and obtain an undue advantage of their neighbour, so forcibly described in the Book of Proverbs: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he goeth his way, he boasteth himself." Instead of pursuing this worldly course, men would "look not every man upon his own things, but every man also on the things of others." And if we only loved each other with anything like the measure of that ardent, constant, generous, and disinterested love with which our Lord and King has loved us,—a love stronger than death, a love which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown; yes, my dear friends, if we only had a portion of this love,—if this flame, which burnt in his heart like coals of

fire, dwelt in the hearts of all who profess his name; if they only acted like the Aaronic priests, who were directed every morning to burn wood upon the altar, that the fire thereof might never go out; if they thus drew daily from the heart of that crucified Saviour, whose love passes knowledge, then heaven would come down to earth. All strife and bickering and party spirit would be banished from the world, and that which was declared of the first Christians would again become a common saying, "See how these Christians love!"

Oh! that the Lord would pour down the abundance of his Spirit of love upon his Universal Church!—would, in these latter days, give us a foretaste of his righteous sceptre, by thus ruling in the hearts of his people, taking away our natural selfishness, and granting us "to love one another with pure hearts, fervently!"

Let this be your earnest prayer, my beloved friends,—offered in secret, in your family, in your social meetings,—that "love may abound yet more and more." We have the greatest reason to expect favourable answers to such prayers, since it is in such perfect accordance with the mind of our coming King. This is declared in the last clause of my text, in which the inspired writer makes known the inward excellences and

glorious reward of our King: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

To this, HIS INWARD EXCELLENCE AND GLORIOUS REWARD, I would now, in the third place, call your attention.

It gives a particularly pleasing and engaging view of our Lord, for it shows the foundation upon which the equity of his government and the perfection of his laws are founded, namely, upon the gracious affections which filled his soul. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity." This is the state of his mind; and we have only to trace his progress from the season in which the Eternal Spirit has been pleased to reveal the course of the Son of God till his death upon the cross, and that which we have since heard and seen of him, to be convinced of the delightful truth, that he has indeed "loved righteousness, and hated iniquity." For to what are we to trace his covenant engagement for his people in the counsels of eternity, when he undertook to be their Surety, and as the Captain of their salvation, to bring his own many sons to glory? Was it not his love of righteousness? Did he not say: "Lo, I come. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart?"

And what is the law of God but a good, a just, and holy law,—the law of love,—a law that loves righteousness, and hates iniquity.

Might not the same character be given him, when, laying aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, he appeared as a babe in Bethlehem, wrapt in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger? Was it not his desire to establish righteousness, and to abolish injustice? For did he not give himself for us, that “he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works?” The same gracious affections were still more clearly manifested when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

For whilst he proved his love to righteousness by preferring in his dreadful agony his Heavenly Father’s will to his own, he showed his hatred of iniquity by destroying him who has been a deceiver from the beginning, triumphing over him on his cross and making a show of him openly.

And does not the revelation he has given to us of his future kingdom declare the same truths? For what will the new heavens and new earth be but a kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness? and what the city that comes down from heaven? It is the holy city, the New Jerusalem, into which

“there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.” Yes, my beloved friends, so much is the character of our coming King, the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, the character given in my text of the God-man, that, if we minutely trace the whole course of his life,—his public discourses, his private intercourse with his friends, his benevolent miracles, they all show his love to righteousness and his hatred to iniquity. What love did he manifest to those who, like Nathaniel, were “Israelites indeed, in whom there was no guile,” and with what cutting reproofs did he meet the hypocrisy of the Pharisees—men whom he compares “to whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones and of all uncleanness.”

But we need not occupy the time in giving further proofs of facts with which you are so well acquainted, although, my friends, such is the pleasure to be derived from the contemplation of this part of the character of our coming King, that I could not but bring some proofs of these excellences to your remembrance. I have done this rather from the peculiarly interesting fact connected with it, as declared by the inspired prophet, in the last clause of my text—“Thou

hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

There was an anointing which was in use in ancient times, when persons were set apart to rule as kings—there was also an anointing which was a customary civility when persons came to an entertainment; to this our Lord refers, when he was invited to dine with Simon the Pharisee—there were also three seasons upon which our Lord was specially anointed with the Holy Ghost. First, at, or rather before, his birth, when "the Holy Ghost came upon his mother, the Virgin Mary," and "the power of the Highest overshadowed her." Secondly, at his baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. Thirdly, at his ascension, as mentioned by St. Peter, when God anointed* him with the Holy Ghost and with power; but the anointing mentioned in my text appears to refer to a later season, when, having triumphed over his enemies, and shown the righteousness of his sceptre, sitting on his throne of glory, the Lord Jehovah pours forth upon the God-man, his well-beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased, those graces of the Holy Spirit which fill the human soul of our

* Acts x. 38.

blessed Lord with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

There will, in the day of his appearing, be that which may, indeed, fill his soul with gladness. For when he sees the complete accomplishment of all "the purposes of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, fulfilled in gathering together in one all things in him, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him, to the praise of the glory of his grace," with what joy will his love to his Father, and his delight to see him honoured fill his soul!—or, when he beholds that great multitude whom no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne, all redeemed with his precious blood, all the trophies of his glorious triumph, and all appearing like jewels polished as stones to adorn his crown. When he beholds this wonderful spectacle, and bears in mind that there is not one of these redeemed saints but will be continually increasing in glorified bliss through the countless ages of eternity—these most happy circumstances might of themselves fill his soul with joy unspeakable. But it is in addition to all this, that he is anointed with the oil of gladness, or with those ineffable pleasures in which the eternal God,

long before time began, yea, through an immeasurable eternity, himself dwelt, therefore called the "blessed" or "the happy God." *

My beloved friends, the subject leads to thoughts which can only be conceived when we shall know as we are known. Still less can any mortal lips properly express them. And yet this "oil of gladness," in which our coming King will be anointed, is not a mere theoretic subject, but one in which every individual now present, who has truly fled to Christ Jesus the Lord, has the deepest personal interest.

For such is the love that He bears to his faithful subjects, that when he offered up his intercessory prayer for them, these were his words: "The glory which thou hast given me I have given them,"—"and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." In perfect accordance with this prayer, when he represents himself as coming on his throne of glory with the holy angels, or when he takes account of his servants, thus he speaks to them individually, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many

* του μακαριου Θεου, 1 Tim. i. 11.

things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." You mark the words, my Christian friends, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," even his joy, who is anointed with the oil of gladness.

As the oil that was poured upon Aaron's reverend head descended to the skirts of his garments, so this oil of gladness, with which our coming King is anointed, shall descend to the very humblest of his faithful subjects; not only to those to whom he has given great power, or entrusted many talents, but to those who have been faithful in little things.

Yes, there is not one of you, my dear friends, who have this evening come forth to this house of prayer from one of the courts or narrow lanes of this populous parish, who, before you came, were in secret pouring out your hearts to the Lord, and acknowledging him as your Lord and King, your Saviour and Redeemer, yea, your all in all,—there is not one of you, my Christian friends, but shall be anointed with this oil of gladness—not indeed in the same measure with your King, for this is his peculiar privilege, "Thou hast anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellows." For as he is "the chiefest of ten thousand," and altogether lovely, the unique Saviour, the one "Pearl of great price," the "Branch of Renown," the "King of kings, and Lord of

lords," he is justly preferred before all; still you shall have a measure of this oil of gladness:—

Millions of years thy blissful eyes
Shall o'er his beauties roll,
While streams of pleasures from his throne
Shall fill your happy soul.

Thus, my beloved friends, have I endeavoured, as the Lord has enabled me, to comply with the request of your beloved minister to address you upon this wonderful portion of the inspired word of God. Allow me, before I conclude, to offer some brief practical improvement.

First, how ought this subject to strengthen our faith and to fix our souls with perfect confidence on our only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! For who, my friends, is our Master? Who, I say, is He whose servants we are honoured to be? Who, I say, is He? We are the servants of the King—the King of Glory;—the King who will soon extend his kingdom over all the earth and soon appear, "having on his head many crowns"—and above all, the King of whom the word of truth declares, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Not such a tottering throne as we have seen lately occupied by earthly monarchs, a throne from which one monarch has fled for his life; another monarch has abdicated, and other

sovereigns hold in jeopardy. Upon no such thrones as these does he, whom we delight to call our King, sit. No; His is an eternal throne.

And, therefore, my friends, feeling that we are on the Conqueror's side, let us, with ~~the~~ ^{our} mind and one heart, strive to hasten ~~the~~ ^{his} coming; let us, by lively faith in his name, by earnest prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, by active exertion in his cause, and especially by a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, seek to bring in many to the obedience of the faith, that, even should his coming be delayed, we may have the high and blessed privilege of preparing some at least ~~the~~ ^{the} jewels for his crown; and of gathering ~~some~~ ^{some} of that glorious company who shall join in the universal shout, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Secondly, how forcibly should this subject act as a warning to those who have not yet submitted to his righteous sceptre! If, when Almighty God gave the command, "Let there be light, and there was light," some unhappy being should have raised his puny voice, and said, "No, I forbid the light to shine," should we not have said, "What egregious folly, what consummate madness, for a mere creature to

think of stopping the command of the Great Jehovah!"

And yet, great as would have been the folly of that individual, it is nothing to his who refuses to bow to the sceptre of our coming King. For has not the Almighty God sworn with an oath that to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father? Yea, has not the word gone forth, "He must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet?" Oh, then, should there be any persons present who have hitherto, I would not say opposed, but neglected to give the Lord Jesus Christ the honour and glory due to his name, let the words of my text sink deep into their hearts—"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Who is it you neglect to honour? It is the King, from whose powerful arm none can escape. For when rolling years shall cease to move, his throne abides firm as the rock of ages. And on this throne he wields a righteous sceptre, and it is this which will insure your destruction. For it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to impenitent sinners: "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus

Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Oh, then, my friends, "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Finally.—It is said of the King, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness, therefore" God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,"—thus connecting his blissful anointing with his righteous will. How ought this declaration to lead us, my Christian friends, to earnest prayer that the Lord would write his law upon our hearts, and put it into our inward parts, that thus it might be our great aim to carry into practice the righteous commands of our King, remembering that his word declares, "That the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." First, righteousness, then peace, then joy in the Holy Ghost. Yes, this should be constantly borne in mind, that whilst our salvation is entirely of grace, "not of works, lest any man should boast," the Lord, to encourage his people to walk holily and unblameably before him, has connected holiness and happiness together.

Thus our blessed Saviour has said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him." This he will do by coming to him and making his abode with him, dwelling in his heart by his Spirit, and thus granting him all joy and peace in believing.

Be assured of this, that the more closely we follow the steps of our Lord, taking him as our example, the happier we shall be.

Should we yield to the temptations of the world by declining from this way of holiness, falling by little and little into the spirit of those who are living without God in the world, we shall find that it will be leaving the path in which we have the light of God's countenance shining upon us, to be surrounded by the gloomy shades which doubts, and worldly cares, and perplexing anxieties ever bring.

Let it be your aim, then, to anticipate the day when the King, receiving the oil of gladness, will make his faithful subjects partakers of his joy. Now "walk in the light as he is in the light," that having "the seal of the Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance," you may now live in the full enjoyment of "the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our

Saviour Jesus Christ," to whom, in union with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory ascribed, now and for evermore.
Amen.

LECTURE IV.

THE WORLD TO COME IN SUBJECTION TO CHRIST.

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HEBREWS II. 5—9.

“For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower

than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

OUR subject is what the apostle calls "the world to come;" and as he speaks of it with pointed reference to the eighth Psalm, it will be convenient in the outset, and I hope instructive in the sequel, to read and briefly consider that portion of Holy Scripture.

PSALM VIII.

"1. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

"2. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

"3. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

"4. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man, that thou visitest him?

"5. For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

“6. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet:

“7. All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

“8. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

“9. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”

The general meaning of this Psalm as a song of admiring and adoring praise, is sufficiently plain; but considerable difficulty attaches to some of the particulars. On the third and fourth verses Bishop Horne writes thus:—

“At the time of inditing this Psalm, David is evidently supposed to have had before his eyes the heavens as they appear by night. He is struck with the awful magnificence of the wide extended firmament, adorned by the moon, walking in brightness, and rendered brilliant by the vivid lustre of a multitude of shining orbs, differing from each other in magnitude and splendour. And when, from surveying the beauty of heaven, with its glorious show, he turns to take a view of the creature man, he is still more affected by the mercy than he had before been by the majesty of the Lord; since far

less wonderful it is, that God should make such a world as this, than that he who made such a world as this should be 'mindful of man' in his fallen estate, and should 'visit' human nature with his salvation."

Doubtless this, and much more of this kind, may, with much propriety, be spoken in elucidation of this Psalm. Such contemplations of mingled piety and poetry are, to some minds, very engaging, and may, in their place and measure, be really profitable. But for the full meaning and application of the Psalm as a whole, we must go much deeper than these. Considered as an effusion of pious poetry, a great part of the Psalm might be read as language suitable for Adam in paradise rather than the language of David in a fallen world. We may well imagine Adam surveying the splendour by which he was surrounded, and with simple reference to the comparative insignificance of man as a creature, exclaiming, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and then proceeding to speak of the dominion given him over this lower creation, in accordance with what we read in the first chapter of Genesis, "Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of

the seas:" and well and naturally might he conclude with, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

But that more, much more, than this is required for an explanation of the Psalm, is manifest from the second verse: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength (or perfected praise) because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Whom, or what, are we to understand by the enemy and the avenger? These are titles given to the chief of the devils; elsewhere called "the prince of this world," "the god of this world," "the spirit who now worketh in the children of disobedience."* But what has this to do with an admiring apostrophe to external nature? This second verse implies a state of things which requires to be rectified,—the existence and power of an enemy who must be *stilled*, or subdued into quiet harmlessness.

It implies, also, the use of means for this purpose,—means naturally inadequate, in themselves, to the attainment of the end proposed; as the mouths of infants are inadequate to the utterance of the highest and strongest strains of praise; but rendered effectual by the power of God.

* St. John xiv. 30; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. ii. 2.

This describes such a state of things as we live in under the Gospel. The great enemy of God and man still rages "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;"* and the Son of God is come, to conquer through yielding, to establish strength through weakness, nay, through death, which seemed to be his own complete and final defeat, "to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."†

In the course of our Lord's personal ministry, an incident occurred, at once fulfilling the letter of this verse, and affording an illustration of this truth: "When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosannah to the Son of David! they were sore displeased, and said to him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea, have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"‡

The children sang the song of triumph to Messiah which shall be sung in its fulness and perfection when the enemy shall be completely stilled. The period referred to is the same to which our Lord referred when he said to the Jews, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye

* 1 Pet. v. 8.

† Heb. ii. 14.

‡ St. Matt. xxi. 15, 16.

shall say, Hosannah! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." *

Comparing this second verse, then, with the conclusion of the Psalm, we perceive that a state of things resembling the position of Adam in Eden is contemplated as to succeed (when the enemy shall be stilled) a state of things resembling our present circumstances of exposure to the enmity and revenge of Satan.

This will aid us in understanding aright the apostle's use of the Psalm, to which we now turn.

Concerning *the world to come*, whereof the apostle speaks, the passage before us contains two assertions. Angels are not to be the rulers of it, and man is. In other words, it is not a part of God's revealed design to place the world to come in subjection to angels; but it is a part of that design to place it in subjection to man. This is the subject of these verses considered in themselves; and the whole passage forms a link in the apostle's main argument, considered in its context.

Our first attempt must be to ascertain, with all practicable accuracy, what the thing is that is here spoken of,—what is intended by *the world to come*.

* St. Matt. xxiii. 39.

In religious books and conversation, the phrase is commonly applied to man's future and eternal existence, without any reference to place, and without much exactness of thought as to what is intended by it. *This world* is used to express man's present life, and *the world to come*, his future life, whatever and wherever it may be. But by "the world to come," as used in our text, the apostle plainly means something much more precise than this. His words signify literally, the habitable earth that is to be, *τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσάν*, and the thing intended is the state to which it is the revealed will of God to bring this earth as man's dwelling-place, at his own appointed time; that is, at the second advent of Jesus Christ.

' We cannot, of course, expect that this statement will be received without some corroboration, and we are bound, therefore, fairly to examine the only other meaning which (so far as we are aware) has ever been given to the phrase before us.

Much learning and ingenuity have been expended on attempts to show that by the world to come in this passage, the apostle means the Gospel dispensation, spoken of as future with reference to the Jewish dispensation, which it was to succeed and supersede; and that his assertion

is, that angels do not preside over Christianity as they did over Judaism, but that the Son of man predicted by the Psalmist, *i. e.*, Jesus, does himself preside over it.*

Against this view there are some serious objections. First: the word here used does not appear to be anywhere used where the meaning is undeniably the Gospel dispensation; but it is used where the meaning is undeniably this habitable earth, considered as man's dwelling-place. Greek classical writers use it to express their own country, as distinguished from all the rest of the earth, as if no other land deserved to be called habitable.† The same feeling towards the Roman Empire became afterwards prevalent, and the New Testament writers clearly use the word now under consideration to express the Roman world. Thus, in St. Luke ii. 1, we read, "that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus,

* "This phrase seems to denote the state of the world under Messiah, or the kingdom of the Messiah, which began at his First Advent."—*Parkhurst*.

"The apostle means that the world of believers gathered out of all nations by the preaching of the Gospel, is put under Christ's immediate power, and subject not to angels, but to Christ himself."—*Burkitt*.

Owen, Henry, Hammond, and others, might be cited to the same purpose.

† Demosth. 85, 17.

that all the world (*πασαν τὴν οἰκουμένην*) should be taxed." And in the Acts of the Apostles, xi. 28, we read that "Agabus signified by the Spirit, that there should be great dearth throughout all the world (*ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην*), which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar."

As this use of the word by St. Luke is unequivocal, occurring in contexts which absolutely prescribe its meaning, and as the Gospel dispensation, frequently called an *αἰών*, does not appear to be anywhere unequivocally called an *οἰκουμένη*, we feel that the *onus probandi* lies heavily on those who assert that in Hebrews ii. 5, *οἰκουμένη* signifies the Gospel dispensation.

Another objection is grounded on the amplification in the Psalm of the dominion referred to by the apostle. That amplification is, "All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas," thus fixing attention on the several departments of external nature again brought fully under man's control, and not on a spiritual rule. Had the world to come, predicted in the eighth Psalm, been the Gospel dispensation, we think that the amplified description of it would have been of a different character, as when Isaiah wrote of it, saying, "The lame man shall leap as

a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped."

Another objection is urged from the manner in which the apostle writes of the dominion referred to. He writes of it as a state of things not only future, considered relatively with the Jewish dispensation, but future to himself, when he was writing his Epistle, A. D. 61. He says: "We see *not yet* (οὐπω ὁρωμεν) all things put under him."

For these reasons we are unable to receive the interpretation which represents the world to come whereof we speak (τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν περι ἧς λαλοῦμεν) as a phrase descriptive of the Gospel dispensation.

We revert, therefore, to what we consider a more satisfactory interpretation, namely, that the thing here intended is the state to which it is the revealed will of God to bring this earth as man's dwelling-place, at and after the second coming of Christ. The chief particulars of that state are these:—

(1.) There shall be no more sin.

All the then inhabitants of the earth shall be righteous. All shall love God, and serve God; so that His will shall then be done on earth as it is in heaven. Or, if any of the inhabitants shall

at any time cease to do his will on earth, they shall instantly be treated as those angels were treated who ceased to do his will in heaven ; that is, they shall be cast out. From a passage in the prophecies of Isaiah,* some have imagined that such an event *might possibly* occur during the thousand years ; that a man who had lived an hundred years without sin, might then become a sinner, and that if so, he would be immediately accursed.

That such an event shall take place on a large scale, *after* the thousand years, seems not obscurely predicted in Rev. xx. 7—10. But in no case shall the holiness of Messiah's kingdom be interfered with, any more than the holiness of heaven was, by the great rebellion there of Beelzebub and his associates : " Of his kingdom there shall be no end." The final assault permitted at the end of a thousand years, serves but to confirm His reign for ever ; and so the state of things then existing, and to exist for ever, on the earth, shall be a state without sin. It shall be what another apostle calls, and teaches us eagerly to anticipate, " the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." †

(2.) There shall be no more sorrow.

Sin, the fruitful source of all sorrow, being

* Isa. lrv. 20.

† 2 Pet. iii. 13.

removed, the earth shall be filled with joy and gladness, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. The groans of creation, considered as a travailing woman, shall have ceased, and all her anguish be forgotten, for joy that the great man-child, the mystical Jesus, has been born into the world.

Then shall the saints sing, "Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."* And in that day shall the Jew sing this song in the land of Judah: "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me."† And the angels shall sing, "Amen: worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."‡

(3.) There shall be no more ignorance.

"No man shall then say to his brother, or to his neighbour, Know the Lord." There shall be no occasion: "for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest."§ There shall then be no more heart-breaking masses of unreclaimed immortals, and no more high-pressure begging to

* Rev. xix. 6, 7.

† Rev. v. 12.

‡ Isa. xii. 1.

§ Jer. xxxi. 34.

obtain with difficulty, means to extend even a modicum of instruction to even a tithe of the population.

All shall know him ! Glorious consummation ! How vain has every effort been, and must every effort be, to apply such a prophecy to the Christian dispensation, as having its fulfilment in the present state of things ! Alas, alas ! the bulk of Christendom is still carried captive at his will by the prince of darkness, in utter ignorance of the saving truth and paternal character of God.

To say that the new covenant promised to the Jews is already introduced under the Gospel, and that the language of the prophet means no more than we see verified by the facts of the case now, in the nineteenth century of Christianity, seems to be such an unwarrantable liberty with plain language, as renders the Bible anything that suits the partisan ; and, of course, nothing, worse than nothing, in opposition to the sceptic. Enough of the prophetic testimony has been *literally* fulfilled to serve for unrefutable evidence ; and they are not the most judicious friends of revelation, after all, who attempt to accommodate the remainder of that testimony to a supposed fulfilment, which (in comparison with what has been indeed fulfilled) must seem, at the

best, evasive. Better far to admit a twofold *period* for fulfilment, retaining the *kind*, (the literal, the only satisfactory kind,) than to introduce a twofold kind of fulfilment, rejecting the separating interval. That real Christians—a little flock—the children of *the day*, do, by anticipation in the Spirit, enter into all that is promised, is no argument against this.

(4.) There shall be no more curse.

The curses of ignorance, sorrow, and sin, being removed from man, all the consequent curses upon him and upon the inferior creatures, shall, in like manner, be removed. No pain, no sickness, no decay, no death!

From the fields around him, the original curse shall be removed. That curse consisted in a spontaneous and plentiful supply of weeds unfit for the sustenance of man, and a refusal to yield him food, except in return for the sweat of his brow. In the beginning this was not so. The earth gave richly all that man required, unmixed with noxious weeds. To dress and keep it constituted the happy occupation of Adam; affording opportunity for diligence and the cultivation of taste, but not amounting to toil. This was reversed by the curse. Unto Adam God said: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life:

thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee;" (these sources of toil and trouble to man formed no part of the original creation, they were the bitter produce of the curse;) "and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;" (won by hard labour from what would otherwise be a wilderness of weeds;) "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." *

But the curse shall be removed. Thorns and thistles shall disappear. Irksome toil shall be no more required. The earth shall again yield her increase as at the first, and God, who blessed the happy pair in Paradise, shall give his blessing to the happy race in *the world to come*.

From the lower animals, also, the curse shall be removed. That curse consisted in enmity,—cruelty on one side, terror on the other. In the beginning it was not so. They all assembled in happy harmony in Eden, and received their names from their divinely-appointed sovereign—the first man, to whom they were all peacefully and tamely amenable.

This was reversed by the curse. To the serpent God said: "Thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field;" (all have incurred a curse in the ruin of man, but above all, the chief curse is upon thee, the im-

mediate instrument in that ruin;) “upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.”* Surely the effects produced by this curse extended to a change in the organization of many, if not of all the animals; of many to such a degree, that they could not now live on the original grant of food. God said: “To every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.”† Every green herb!—nothing else. All were graminivorous. How the serpent then went, we know not; but surely not upon his belly, because this crawling mode was a part of the curse afterwards incurred. He must have had originally *some* other mode of going; and this specified change in him is the revealed key to all the differences we behold between a graminivorous creation and the present aspect of the animal tribes.

But the curse shall be removed, with one exception, an exception left as a solitary and solemn memorandum of the past history of the earth: “*dust shall be the serpent’s meat*,”‡ even in the world to come. But as for the rest—“the

* Gen. iii. 14.

† Gen. i. 30.

‡ Isa. lxxv. 25.

wolf" shall again, as at first, "dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (again peacefully and tamely amenable), "and the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."* All graminivorous again! The disposition, as well as the organization for cruelty, removed, and the lovely specimen exhibited in the unclouded morning in Eden, shall be prolonged in the sunshine of a day without night in the world to come.

Such shall "the world to come" be---this earth, with all the then inhabitants thereof, without sin, without sorrow, without ignorance, without curse of any kind, on man, or on beast, or on the fields, or the trees! I have said the *then* population, because in the process of thus establishing the earth, two classes of its present and past population shall be removed---those who have truly believed the Gospel, and those who have rejected it. Those who have believed shall be with Christ, not indeed removed altogether from the earth, but in risen bodies reigning over it, one with Christ, constituting the King, rather than any part of the kingdom. For this, those among

* Isa. xi. 6, 7.

them who have fallen asleep in the faith are now waiting. In Revelation v. 9, 10, we read their song, both retrospective and prospective. Retrospective,—“Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests:” and prospective,—“*we shall reign on the earth.*”

Those who have rejected the Gospel shall be cast into the pit with the fallen angels. They are symbolised by the beast and the false prophet, and include all who have received the mark of the beast in their foreheads or in their hands. “They shall perish: the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs.” “The wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.”

Who then shall remain?—1. The restored Jews, on whose behalf mercy shall have triumphed over judgment, according to the manifold promises made to their forefathers: and 2. The millions of the heathen who have never heard, and of course have never rejected the Gospel; and of whom it is written, that “they shall come to Judah’s light, and their kings to the brightness of her rising:” and again, that “ten men out of all languages of the nations shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew,

saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." *

Having thus examined what we are to understand by "the world to come," whereof the apostle speaks, we proceed to consider his assertions concerning it.

(1.) Angels shall not be the rulers over it.

This is stated simply and briefly in the fifth verse of the chapter now before us: "Unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come." Whatever connexion angels may have with it, in the way of visitors, they are not to be the rulers or governors of it. Rulers it must have. In subjection it must be. Sovereignty, subordination, and order, are the characteristics of all God's works. Angels are not to rule over "the world to come." Then who is?

(2.) This leads to the apostle's second assertion, which he makes, not simply and of his own inspired authority, like the former; but by quoting and applying, as we have seen, the language of the Psalmist, "One in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than" (or for a little while inferior to) "the angels: Thou crownedst him with glory and

* Isa. lx. 3; Zech. viii. 23.

honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." In other words, it is the revealed will of God to place "the world to come" in subjection under the man spoken of in this certain place, this viiiith Psalm.

The place referred to contains three clauses descriptive of the progress of the man in question. The first describes him as made for a little while inferior to angels: the second, as crowned with glory and honour: and the third, as having all the works of God in the world to come placed in subjection under him. These were all prophecies when they were written by the Psalmist. They were purposed and predicted, but none of them had then been performed. When St. Paul quoted them, a change had taken place. Two out of the three had become history, fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The third was still a prophecy, not yet fulfilled. Such was the apostle's comment. He says, "*We see* Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." These two clauses of the Psalm are fulfilled. "*But now we see not yet* all things put under him." This clause remains to be fulfilled.

By this we are guided, with much accuracy, to the right interpretation of the species of subjec-

tion here predicted. There is a sense in which all things are already in subjection to Jesus. "All power is given him in heaven and in earth;" and "He is head over all things, to the Church which is his body." "He is exalted to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him." We say, or imply, or think, nothing against *this* dominion of the Lord Jesus. It is at once the safety and the happiness of his Church that *this* rule is complete. But is this what St. Paul writes of in our text? If so, why his distinction between what was then seen to be fulfilled, and what was *not yet* seen? The incarnation had visibly taken place. The resurrection and ascension had visibly taken place. These clauses in the prophecy were seen to have been fulfilled. The present invisible dominion of Jesus was fully established. Concerning it the apostle could not speak as a thing *not yet*, for it *was then*. But the second coming of the Lord Jesus was *not yet*. And his visible rule, as the second Adam, over a restored creation, was *not yet*. As it was in the apostle's days, so it is in ours. The incarnation, which was for ages and generations prophecy, has become history. The resurrection and ascension, which were for ages and generations prophecy, have become history;

but the reign of Christ over "the world to come" we see not yet; it is still prophecy.

For this we wait, looking for and hasting unto the coming of that day, when "the creation which still groans and travails in pain, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." *

This is that "better land," that golden age, after which the human heart yearns, and for the introduction of which so many fond schemes are fondly propounded. We deny not the possibility of much improvement by such means. The best institutions framed by fallible men must ever be open to progressive amendment; and as the wants of society are better understood, institutions, to meet and supply them, ought to be better constituted. But for the main point, all must prove radically abortive, while sin is intermingled with them; no superstructure can be permanent which has sin in the foundation. In all the attempts now referred to there is this plague-spot—selfish covetousness, or party spirit, or envy, or ambition, under the mask of philanthropy or patriotism: and the history of them all is written in one word, applied by the prophet with the solemnity of a threefold reiteration to a monarchy of antiquity—*overturn*. "Thus saith the Lord God:

* Rom. viii. 21.

Remove the diadem, take off the crown : this shall not be the same : exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." *

The world is Christ's *right*. It is his "purchased possession," which he has not yet redeemed out of the hand of the enemy. † It is a legal purchase. Redemption is not an act of mere sovereign power, irrespective of law; it is a legal act. The first Adam and his dominion became Satan's lawful captives; and by the second Adam, stilling the enemy and avenger, the lawful captives are lawfully delivered. To this end the Deliverer was made "under the law," ‡ and kept the law.

To this end he was made inferior to the angels for a little while, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. This is the connexion of the close of the ninth verse. The Redeemer came "under the law" as a rule, and as a broken rule: as a rule to obey it, as a broken rule to endure the penalty incurred by transgression. "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing

* Ezek. xxi. 26, 27

† Eph. i. 14.

‡ Gal. iv. 4.

many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect," (perfect in his *office* as Saviour—in his *person* he was always perfect, or he could not have borne the discipline indispensable to the perfection of his office,) "through sufferings."

And now we consider, finally and briefly, the connexion of the whole passage as it occurs in the context.

It is a continuation, after a brief interruption, of the argument in the first chapter. The apostle's subject was the personal dignity of the Lord Jesus. This he states, first directly, and then relatively. Directly, he declares him to be "the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person," upholding all things by the word of his power, and, having accomplished the redemption of man, now seated on the right hand of God. Relatively, and in comparison with angels, he declares the superiority of Christ. This he does by an appeal to the language of the Hebrew Scriptures. To which of the angels did God at any time address such language as we find in the Psalms and Prophets repeatedly addressed to Christ? To which of the angels said he at any time, "Thou art my Son?" To which of the angels said he at any time, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the

sceptre of thy kingdom?" To which of the angels said he at any time, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth?" Had the form of the sentence been continued in the argument, our text would have stood thus:—To which of the angels said he at any time, I will make thee a little lower than the angels, crown thee with glory and honour, and put the world to come in subjection under thee?

The course of the argument, however, is interrupted by a practical inference which forms the opening of the second chapter, and gives an insulated and disjointed aspect, at first reading, to the words of our text. The practical inference thus interjected is simply this: the greater dignity of the speaker should give greater weight to his words. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip," or allow them to leak out. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;" if no one could escape who neglected what was spoken by the Lord's messengers, "how shall we escape if we neglect the great salvation" spoken by the Lord himself?

"The lion hath roared, who will not fear?
The Lord God hath spoken, who can but pro-

phesy?"* And who can expect impunity if he refuse to give earnest heed to the words of the Lord? Beware, my brethren, of those plausible appeals to general abstract principles, which would fix your chief attention on the workings of your own deceitful hearts and minds, rather than on the sure word of God. Who can understand his own heart? We are a wonder to ourselves, and if left to ourselves, it would be no wonder if we went astray. But we are not left to ourselves, neither are we left to the mercy of any fallible pilot, but we are each supplied—O how graciously! with a chart of infallible accuracy.

"Search the Scriptures." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil; for evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall *inherit the earth.*" They shall be "*heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.*" "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be" in the earth; "but the meek shall *inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*"

* AMOS iii. 8.

LECTURE V.

THE REST WHICH REMAINETH FOR THE
PEOPLE OF GOD.

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HEBREWS IV. 9.

*“ There remaineth therefore a rest to the people
of God.”*

THE whole of creation requires rest. The earth itself, the trees which cover it, and the countless beings by which its surface is inhabited, all have their season appointed for repose. “ Even the ocean has its time of rest.” Nor does the privilege belong to creation only; for even God himself is said to rest. It is impossible fully to understand the exact character of that expression, for since creation was the simple exercise of his will, the work must have been complete without fatigue; and since all is the fruit of Omnipotence,

there could have been no exhaustion of his power. Yet even He "rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." It is no wonder, then, that rest is one of our chief necessities. As created after God's image we must expect to resemble him in this; and if the law of rest was one of the characteristics of an omnipotent Creator, how much more of the feeble creature of his hand! As fallen from that likeness, we again stand in need of it; for in the day of our fall we were condemned to toil; and as daily life was then made the fruit of daily labour, so there was a new and mournful value given to the sacred privilege of rest. And as the servants of the Lord we require it; for we are called to joys and struggles of which the world knows nothing,—joys which should so fill the heart with hope and interest, that the heaven-born spirit should scarcely endure the hinderance, while it strives against the drawback of its present shell of flesh; and struggles which might daunt the courage even of the most mighty conqueror,—for all the powers of hell are arrayed against the saint, and all is done that Satan can do to arrest and check his progress. There is indwelling sin, again, like a constant weight drawing him downwards, while the kingdom of heaven is so high exalted, that to be won it must suffer violence, and the violent

must take it by force. We may well, therefore, long for rest; we may justly inquire when the struggle shall be over, the victory won, and the whole Church of Christ repose in tranquillity in the Lord.

Now the chapter from which the text is taken contains a proof that there is such a rest in store for the people of the Lord, and the text itself is the summing up or conclusion of the argument. This argument is one of great importance, not merely because of the blessed conclusion to which it leads, but because of the example which it affords of the use of the understanding in the investigation of the word. The understanding must never be permitted to sit in judgment on revelation, or to call in question revealed truth, because our powers fail to fathom it; but it should be employed as the handmaid of revelation, and be called into active exercise, both to establish its evidence and learn its meaning. To this latter purpose St. Paul employs it in the chapter. He is urging the disciples to take warning from the history of the Israelites in the wilderness. They had a promise of rest, but they enjoyed it not, for they fell through want of faith: we have a promise, too; let us take heed lest any man fall through the same example of unbelief. This is the general scope of his appeal;

but as thus stated, there is one link clearly wanting in the chain, viz., some proof or evidence that there is a promise of rest given to us in like manner as there was to them. Upon the existence of such a promise the whole appeal depended, and the scriptural mind of the apostle would not assume it without adducing scriptural proof. This proof is drawn out from Psalm xcv. 11: "Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest;" or according to the parallel expression in the Hebrews: "If they shall enter into my rest." Here, then, is the existence of a rest clearly revealed, a rest which God declares to be his own; and the question which he proceeds to solve is this,—are we to regard this rest as past or future, as already possessed, or as still remaining for the people of God? Does it look back to some rest enjoyed in former days by the Jews, or does it look onwards to the promises of the Gospel in Christ Jesus?

There were two remarkable rests enjoyed by the Jewish nation, to either of which it was far from improbable that the Psalmist of Israel might refer; *the rest of the Sabbath, and the rest in Canaan.* But he cannot speak of the Sabbath, argues St. Paul, for it was appointed at the creation; whereas the words of David represent the rest as future. In the Book of Genesis God,

says, "God did rest the seventh day from all his works," which describes the Sabbath rest as coeval with creation; but now, in the Psalm he says again, "If they shall enter into my rest,"—words which prove that the gift is future. The rest, therefore, of the text is something beyond the Sabbath—something remaining for the Church. On the same principle it cannot refer to the rest in Canaan; for in the seventh verse of that same Psalm David distinctly speaks of "to-day." He limiteth a certain day, saying, "To-day," long after the entrance on the promised land; as in the words, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Now, if the rest of the passage had been that to which Joshua, here called Jesus, had conducted them, David, after so long a time, could never have spoken of another day. The people would have then already entered on their rest, and ceased from their works, as God did from his. Again, therefore, the passage is proved to predict a rest still future, when the Psalms of David were inspired.

The outline, therefore, of his proof is as follows:—The existence of a rest is clearly proved by the language of the ninety-fifth Psalm, which says, "If they shall enter into my rest." This cannot be the rest of the Sabbath, for that had been ordained at the creation; nor can it be the

rest of Canaan, for David, writing four centuries after Joshua, still speaks of to-day. The words, therefore, must have a future reference, and there remaineth a rest for the people of God.

What, then, is this rest that remaineth, and what is its character? To these important questions we must now devote our careful study. And, that we enjoy the very presence of the Holy Spirit, to solemnize our minds, to direct our thoughts, and to prepare us for the rest which in grace he has prepared for his people!

In answer to the question, "What is the rest?" we must bear in mind the guiding principle which pervades the prophetic writings. It is in perspective, as in nature, that, when different objects are viewed from a distance, they are all regarded as a single group, and the distinctive details disappear from the view. If you look across a wide-spread valley to a distant range of mountains in the horizon, you gain at once a bird's-eye view of the whole range; and when you mark the lofty peaks, may be told, perhaps, that such an one is Snowden, or such Mont Blanc; but when you commence the ascent of these mighty hills, you discover that they consist, not of one peak only, but of many,—you see peak after peak rising around you, and each with so much magnificence that you might justly suppose it to be the one

which had attracted your admiration in the distance, if you were not constantly reminded of the contrary by the presence of the one grand summit, which lifts its lofty head into the clouds, and appears to reign supreme above them all. Just so it is in the great prophecies of the Gospel. When predicted from the distance, they are grouped together as a single object; but when we stand in the midst of them, the great acts of God rise up in such magnificence that they furnish each one an ample fulfilment of the prophecy. Thus, when God looked across the dark and dreary interval between man's ruin and his redemption, and tempered his judgment with mercy by the announcement of a future victory, he described the whole Gospel as a single act, and summed up all in the promise, "It shall bruise thy head." We, living in the midst of Gospel gifts, might ask the question, To what event did he refer? When did the Saviour bruise the serpent's head? Was it at the first advent, or will it be at the second? And if it be at the first, when was it? At the crucifixion, at the resurrection, at the ascension, or at the outpouring of the Spirit? Some might refer it to one event, and some to another; but God throws the whole into one. The whole work of the Redeemer,—the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, gift of the Holy

Ghost, ingathering of his elect, and final victory at his coming, are all represented as one single blow, inflicted by one hand, perfected by one person, and issuing in the final triumph of the one Redeemer, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Just so it is with the rest of the text. David looked forward across an interval of above a thousand years, and saw in the coming Gospel a whole group of the most inestimable blessings; so when God inspired him to warn the people of their unbelief and sin, he did not stop to separate the detail, but proclaimed the whole as one, declaring, "I have sworn in my wrath if they shall enter into my rest." It is true, that amongst the blessings there may be one central and supreme, like the principal crag in the group of mountains; but this does not exclude the others, for they are parts of the one whole, the different stages in the one great work of God. Accordingly, in the chapter itself there is clear intimation of this progressive or inclusive character of the rest; for in one verse believers are described as in present possession of it; in another they are urged to holy labour, in the earnest hope of gaining it. In ver. 3, the language is, "We which have believed do enter into rest," descriptive of our present possession; and in ver. 11, "Let us

labour, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief,"—alluding plainly to our future hope.

We shall, therefore, best gain the mind of the Spirit by applying the passage to the different forms of rest enjoyed by the people of God in Christ Jesus, regarding them as parts of one whole, and as forming together a progressive fulfilment of the Psalmist's prophecy. We shall thus be able to trace its gradual growth, observing it, in the first place, taking root in the hidden recesses of the soul, and giving a hallowed peace to the believer, notwithstanding the disturbing force of outward circumstances; we may then follow it a step further, when the peace is perfected in heaven, and the soul of the ransomed believer, being freed from cares, has both inward peace and outward rest in the forefront of the throne of the Lamb; and then we may pass on to the great and glorious consummation of the whole, when the joys of triumph must be added to the repose of safety, and the whole multitude of God's elect shall rejoice together in the kingdom of their Lord.

1. The first form, then, or period, in this progressive rest is, *that now enjoyed by the justified believer.* To this our Lord alludes when he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy

laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The rest of this passage is very plainly spiritual in its character, and present in its possession; spiritual, for it is a rest to the soul in the midst of labour; and present, for it is inseparably connected with the yoke of Jesus. It is, therefore, that inward peace which the Lord bestows on the believer, when justified by his grace and consecrated to his will. It is that holy, calm, and well-assured persuasion of security which the poor trembling sinner finds in the fact, that all his sins have been blotted out by the Lamb's blood, and that he stands accepted in the imputed righteousness of his Lord. Without the assurance of such acceptance there is no possibility of rest. There may be anxiety and zeal,—nay more, there may be deep emotion and true devotedness; but there cannot be rest. While men are toiling on for acceptance, and the great question remains undecided, Am I safe in the Lord's grace? it would only prove that apparent zeal was a fiction, if it could suffer the soul to rest with a matter of such awful moment remaining in suspense. Accordingly, there is no rest to those who hope to carry to the throne the

slightest qualification for a pardon. They may toil hard for what they consider the needful character; but however low be their standard, there is not the power in their nature to attain even to that, and their whole career must be a series of resolutions made and broken, of hopes entertained and disappointed. It is only when justified by faith that we can enjoy the gift of peace with God,—i.e., it is only when we are brought to the deep conviction that we have nothing, and never can have anything, but that salvation is a free gift, granted to the sinner without money and without price, for the one simple reason that the Son of God himself has made an ample atonement for the whole.

And then how sweet is the rest! There may be storms and tempests in the outward world, but the believer is like Noah in the midst of the flood, shut into the ark by the Lord himself, and borne up securely by the very flood that overthrows the world. There may be many a sore and bitter trial,—trials so severe that without a Saviour they would cut his heart through to its very core; but in the midst of all he rests, for they cannot touch his life, that being hid with Christ in God, so that no outward force can avail anything to bereave him of his joy.

Still more, there may be the deep inner con-

dict with sin; the bitter conviction of our heart's hardness; the deep lamentation of soul, because love is so cold and faith so feeble; the stern self-reproach for the miserable service of such a gracious Lord. But even in the midst of that there is rest; not the rest of contentment, which shall lead a man to sit still and be satisfied with the doctrine that his nature is corrupt; for the believer rests not in striving, in hastening, in praying, in reaching forth, in pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. But the rest of calm conviction that, notwithstanding all he is safe, that his sin does not cut him off from God, because a full atonement has been made for the whole; and that it cannot separate him from Christ, because he has His own most certain promise: "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Thus in the midst of conflict he is at rest, and at the very time that his heart is most deeply distressed for its corruption, he can peacefully cast himself into the arms of the Beloved, and there repose in safety, in the full assurance of unbounded love.

But, after all, this rest is limited, and defective. It has two great drawbacks from its perfection,—outward evil, and inward weakness. There are the trials of situation, for we stand in the midst

of a fallen world; and there are the dangers of indwelling sin, which require the most ardent conflict at the very time of the most tranquil peace.

We may pass on, then, to the second form or period of the Christian's rest,—

2. *The rest of departed believers in the presence of the Lord.*

The well-known words in Rev. xiv. 13 will supply us with ample warrant for this application of the passage: "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, thus saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." The passage appears to stand in the order of the prophecy at the commencement of the fiery trial of the latter days, the harvest and the vintage being the next consecutive events. To this the words "from henceforth" probably refer. Death is not always to be counted as a blessing; but the last tribulation is to be of so severe a character, that it is a blessed privilege even to die, that so we may escape the trouble when the vials of wrath are poured out upon the world. At the same time the words supply us with the clearest information as to the state of those who die in Christ. The word "henceforth" may refer to the particular period of the great tribulation; but the latter portion of the verse contains a general statement,

so that in all ages and under all circumstances, those that die in Him "rest from their labours."

If we turn to the fourth and fifth chapters of the Book of Revelation, we shall gain some insight into this blessed repose.* We have there the description of the twenty-four elders and the four living ones (in our beautiful version most unhappily rendered "beasts"), who were "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne of God." Now, whatever be our opinion of the different classes symbolized by the elders and the living ones, it is perfectly plain from chap. v. 9, that they represent together the family in heaven, the multitude of God's elect, who are already gathered in to their rest; for when they all united in leading heaven's mighty chorus, they sang a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." They had, therefore, in former days, been scattered amongst men, they had been called out by grace, and had been made God's children through the power of the Lord's atonement.

Now mark how this rest is the further progress of the germ which we discovered in the living believer. It is enjoyed exclusively by the same

persons. There is no new class introduced. The redeemed rest on earth, and the redeemed rest in heaven. It proceeds also from the same source,—the atonement made for us by the blood of the Lamb. There is no change in its character. It depended upon atonement on earth, and depends on atonement even in heaven. The believer upon earth rests, because in Christ “we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.” The believer in heaven rests, because he can go to that same Saviour and say, “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” In this respect there is a marked difference between the angels’ rest and theirs. In verses 11, 12, we read how the angels take up the hymn; and they, too, admire redeeming love, but they do not rest in it. They adore, but they do not appropriate. They say, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;” but the saints say, “Thou hast redeemed us.” They found their joy even in heaven in the appropriation of the atoning work of Christ Jesus.

But although this heavenly rest is of the same character, how infinitely does it excel it!

The believer upon earth is surrounded by the trials of his outward situation. He is placed in a world whose whole course is opposed to rest. He is kept at peace in spite of outward circumstances. The outward world has no tendency to produce

rest, but every tendency to destroy it, and would effectually do so if it were not overpowered by Divine grace. Its cares, its successes, its pleasures, its sorrows, and, above all, its sins, combine in forming one mighty force for the complete overthrow of the believer's rest; and it is only by looking right away to the Saviour himself that his soul is kept unmoved. If, like Peter, he looks at the storm, he sinks; it is only when he looks away from the storm to Christ Jesus that he walks upon the water and is secure.

But now mark the contrast. Let him once pass the barrier line, and be numbered amongst the spirits of the just made perfect, and he takes his place in the very midst of the throne of God. Before him lies the sea of glass, clear as crystal, the peaceful emblem of the serenity of heaven; above him is the rainbow like unto an emerald, reminding him still of the unchanging covenant; around him stand the whole multitude of angels, the number of whom is ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, with no desire but to spend their angelic strength in the entire performance of the Father's will; while, in the midst of all, and above all, the one centre from which all power radiates, and the one point to which all thoughts are turned, is the throne of God and of the Lamb. And those blessed saints

are in the midst of it. There they are with the Lord himself, and the banner over them is Love.

But man's heart is so corrupt, that no outward circumstance can cure it. Sin is from within, not from without. And so closely does this infection of nature cleave now to those that are regenerate, that if we were placed even there as we now are, we should find our hearts perpetually wandering, and be compelled to maintain an unceasing struggle in order that that throne might never be dishonoured by our sin. There could be no rest even amongst the living ones, if indwelling sin were still to retain its power. It would be better to be surrounded by sin, if ourselves sinless, than to be even there with indwelling sin tainting the soul. But they have neither sin without nor sin within. If they had, they could never rest from their labours; for what believer can rest when there is any remnant of indwelling defilement in his soul? If they had any sin remaining, they would not answer to the apostolic description,—“the spirits of the just made perfect.” (Heb. xii. 23.)

We are to regard them, therefore, as perfect before God. They dwell in the Lord's presence, and they are changed into the Lord's likeness, and so they rest. Who, then, that loves them, would ever wish to rob them of their joy?

There may possibly be mourners here, dear brethren, whose hearts have bled with the bitter pang of separation, and who are now bowed down by the heavy sense of life's loneliness: the father, the mother, the wife, the husband, or the only child, is gone: But sorrow not! As the people of God, they have entered into rest. There they are, at this very moment, before the throne of the Lord. Remember how they mourned for sin, how they wept over its clinging character, how they struggled and prayed against its power; but the last tear was shed when they parted from you, and now they rest, being perfect before God. Remember how the poor, frail, dying body clogged and fettered the motions of the spirit, and how often, with bitter pain, they experienced the fact that, though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak; but now these hinderances are for ever gone; they can serve the Lord without either hinderance or fatigue, for though they rest from labour, they never rest from praise,—“they rest not day and night, crying, Holy! Holy! Holy!” Remember how they longed after their Saviour, how their heart panted, and their soul thirsted for him; how they mourned the weakness of their faith, the coldness of their love, and the dimness of their spiritual sight. But now they are satisfied in him and by

him. There is not even an angel's form to intercept their view of him. They behold his countenance, they rejoice in his love, they hear his voice, and their peaceful resting-place is in the very midst of his throne. Let the tear of grief, then, at your own loss, be mixed with the tear of joy, that those you most dearly love are thus permitted to rest in Jesus.

But even their rest is imperfect. It is but the foreshadowing of that which is to come,—one of the lower ridges of the mountain range; and thus we find them, in vi. 10, evidently waiting hopefully for an expected change: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them, that they should *rest* yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." The same expectation appears in their hymn (Rev. v. 10), for their praises have reference both to the future and the past,—to the past act of a finished redemption, and to the future prospect of an earthly reign: "And we shall reign on the earth." Theirs, therefore, is plainly the rest of expectation; and the reasons are obvious.

In the first place, it is the rest of only a portion of God's elect. It is the privilege of the family,

in heaven ; but, meanwhile, the family on earth, the younger brethren, are still struggling against sin, and fighting their way through a wicked world.

In the next place, even with themselves it is incomplete ; for, according to the description of St. Paul, their spirits only are made perfect, while the poor body is lying under the curse of death, corrupting in the grave. The rest, therefore, cannot be complete until the whole man, soul and body, shall be reunited in its joy.

Nor is the triumph of the Redeemer yet perfected. He is still rejected and disobeyed. His law is still broken, and his saints still despised ; and how can there be perfect rest till he see of the travail of his soul and is satisfied ?—till the last enemy is destroyed, and the Lord alone exalted in his kingdom ?

We are to look forward, then, for some more perfect rest still remaining for God's people. We have ascended two of the lower ridges in the range, but now we are to look out for the lofty mountain-top, which towers in heavenly grandeur above them all.

3. *This perfect rest we shall find in the Advent.* “ And to you that are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.” (2 Thessa. i. 7.)

In thus speaking of the rest of the Advent, it will be needless to draw any distinction between the two great periods into which the coming rest may be again divided by the delivering up of the kingdom as described in 1 Cor. xv. 24. The final hope presented to us in Scripture is the Advent; and the kingdom then to be introduced is the resting-point for our present faith.

Now, this rest has all the features of the rest in heaven. There is much added, but there is nothing taken away. There are the same persons enjoying it, viz., the redeemed. There is the same peace, the same security of outward circumstances, the same inward holiness, and the same satisfaction in Christ. He is still in the midst of his people, and through his grace they are still like him. But all the defective points of the other picture are now filled up, and the rest of expectation gives place to the rest of perfect and unmixed satisfaction in the eternal enjoyment of the Saviour's love.

(1.) It will be a rest enjoyed by *the whole of God's elect*. The whole body of God's chosen people may now be classed under three great divisions. There are those who, having fought the fight of faith, have departed hence, and fallen asleep in Jesus. Next, there are those who are in the midst of their conflict,—the present wit-

nesses for Christ on earth ; and, lastly, there are others not yet called, some unborn even into the world, and others not yet born of God. Now, the first of these classes is the only one that enjoys the rest of heaven ; the second has the germ of it in the form of spiritual peace ; but the third has never yet tasted of its blessing. But, at the coming, all shall be united ; all will be there, and all conquerors. The whole body of God's elect will be gathered, nor will there, throughout the multitude, be one in whom remains the smallest taint of sin. The dead will be there, for " those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him ;" and the living will be there, for " ~~we~~ which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." And those yet unborn shall be there, for " the promise is to you and to your children, and to those that are afar off, even as many as the Lord your God shall call."

Thus there will be a *reunion* of the living and dead in Christ.

Now, we must not underrate the pain of separation. Believers are borne through it by the Lord's grace ; but still the pain is bitter, and the gentle heart must bleed at the day of parting. Our Lord himself wept at the death of Lazarus ;

and it is no sign of the Lord's spirit if we can watch unmoved death's progress, and bid a tearless farewell to those beloved associates whose faithful affection has been the joy and delight of our lives. It is a heartless son that does not weep over a mother's grave. And we may weep. The Scripture never tells us that we are not to sorrow, but rather gives directions as to the character of Christian grief. We are not to "sorrow as those that have no hope." There is to be a gleam of sunshine sparkling in the tear; and the reason is, that when the Lord comes, there will be reunion, "for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

And who can attempt to realise the blessing of that united rest! Consider it for one moment, as it bears upon our homes. The pious mother, *e.g.*, is gathered into her rest before the throne, and she leaves behind her group of little ones. How did she, when here, plead for them with God; how did she wrestle in unceasing prayer on their behalf; how did she strive with God, that, whatever were withheld, this might be granted—that every one might be safe in Christ Jesus! But the day of parting comes; the little group is gathered around her; she gives her last kiss, she offers her last prayer, and dies! She

dies in the Lord, and so she rests before the throne; but the motherless children are left to buffet their way through this rough world, and to seek from strangers what no stranger can ever give,—the indescribable tenderness of a mother's love. But the prayer is heard, and they grow up as the soldiers of the Lord, faithful believers, and unflinching witnesses for the Cross: till at length there is a new sound heard,—it is the voice of the archangel, the trump of God: the Son of man is come, and those that sleep in Jesus are the joyful companions of his progress. Now, if all thoughts are not absorbed by the one subject of the Redeemer's glory, imagine, if you can, the unutterable joy which must fill that mother's heart, when she is once more in the midst of her little ones, no longer now to part from them in the helplessness of their infancy, but to welcome them as her joyful companions in the kingdom, and to present them to the Lord as her joy and crown of rejoicing, that henceforth as one unbroken family they may altogether rest in Jesus.

Then, again, the *living will attain their rest*, or, in other words, the Church militant will be merged into the Church triumphant.

We cannot say that the people of God have entered into their rest, when a large portion of that people are still in the very midst of their

conflict. The living believer is as dear to the Lord as the departed spirit before the throne. The poor unworthy Christian, who worships and witnesses below, who groans over indwelling sin, and struggles in weakness to glorify his Lord, has as close an interest in the Father's love, as the twenty-four elders who now surround the throne, for it is the righteousness of Christ that forms the only loveliness of them all; and while one saint is still struggling, the people of God are not yet perfected in their rest. But the rest at the Advent is to comprehend us all, as we are taught (xi. 40), "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." They must not enter on the fulness of their joy till we are called to share it with them. Now, think of the rest as provided for the living Church. The last days are to be charged with heavy trial. They are to be days of delusion, of deception, and distress. So terrible is to be their character, that the elect themselves shall scarcely stand, and for the elect's sake they must be shortened. The Lord's children will then be much like the little boat's crew on the sea of Galilee, toiling at the oar, but making no way against the storm. But as with them, so with us. *He will come, walking on the waters; and the moment he comes there will be

a calm. There will be none of the intermediate pain of death. The Sun of Righteousness will arise before the night of death closes in; and in the midst of their activity they will find themselves resting in the Lord. There will be no more tempters to deceive, no more doubts to harass, and no more Antichrists to persecute; the Lord himself shall put an end to all, and the Lord's people shall rest in his unresisted kingdom.

(2.) We found the present rest in heaven to be imperfect, inasmuch as it does not include the *body*. It is the perfect fulfilment of our Lord's promise, "Ye shall find rest unto your souls;" but the beautiful body, which God created in his own likeness, is still the subject of fatigue, decay, and death. It would be wasting time to point out how living believers are deprived in the body of their rest. The labour for daily bread, the sense of fatigue, the cares and pains of sickness, and the irresistible approach of age, are all daily witnesses that the poor fallen body is bereft of its rest. And the bodies of the departed have only advanced one step further in their ruin. With them the work is complete, which with us is only in its progress. It is no rest to be scattered to the winds in dust, no rest to be the prey of worms; it is the curse of God which has taken all

present rest from the flesh. But in the midst of all this ruin we are taught by David, Psalm xvi. 9, that "the flesh itself shall rest in hope," *i. e.*, that even the very limbs shall submit peacefully to their ruin, in the blessed expectation that they too shall have their rest at the resurrection. Then death will be swallowed up in victory; then the Lord will fulfil his promise, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." It will not matter then at which period of the body's ruin we are found. If dead, we shall be raised, and if living, we shall be changed: the martyr's ashes will be gathered, and the wearied frame of the living believer will be transformed; so that all together shall rest in an incorruptible immortality: "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." There will be a total rest from all those ills that flesh is heir to, for the promise is, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain:" and there will be a total rest from all toil of weariness; for if there be work, it will be without fatigue, for "he shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," and then will the ancient promise

have its complete fulfilment :—"They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."


(3.) But the crowning joy of this rest will be that *the Redeemer's kingdom will be then complete.*

Accordingly the language both of the Psalm and chapter speaks of it not merely as his people's rest, but as his own: "If they shall enter into *my* rest;" and again, v. 1, "a promise is left us of entering into *his* rest;" the idea of which words appears to be that it is a rest which he not merely provides, but enjoys, admitting his people to enjoy it with him: he rests himself, and we rest in him. The rest on the Sabbath is the share which God has given us of the rest which he himself enjoyed after creation; and our rest in the Lord will be in like manner our fellowship in the rest which he himself shall enjoy after redemption. Thus it is impossible to enter on the fulness of the rest until the coming, for till then the Lord's kingdom will not be perfected. It is not yet perfect even in his elect, much less in the world. There may be thousands, and tens of thousands of chosen saints not yet called to his kingdom; and even in those that are called, how many and how grievous are the defects! He is working a daily work in the ingathering of souls, and carrying on a daily contest with the great

enemy on our behalf. But if this is the case with his chosen, how much more is his kingdom resisted in the world! The whole world lieth in wickedness, and Satan is permitted to retain such a power, that he had the daring boldness to presume to tempt the Saviour by the specious offer of a willing surrender of his sovereignty. Hence we are to look forward to a time when the Saviour himself shall rest; when as God rested on the seventh day at the close of a finished creation, the Redeemer shall rest in full satisfaction in the enjoyment of a perfected redemption; when, according to the language of the prophet, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

Now this is the rest in store for us at the Advent.

It will be a rest from *toil*, or, as the text expresses it, a Sabbath-keeping,—the holy repose of one whose work is finished. When he died on the cross, he said, "It is finished," for the work of atonement was complete, and at his advent again he may say, "It is finished," for his mediatorial work will then be perfected. We cannot fathom the deep mystery of God resting, but we may gain some insight into the blessed character of that marvellous rest. All conditions of the eternal covenant will then be fulfilled, and all the work to which he was anointed amply performed. There will not remain one of his



elect ungathered, nor a single spot on the garment of any one of them, when he presents them spotless and unblameable before the throne. Throughout the world will there be found no rebel thoughts, for the "new heavens and the new earth" shall be filled with righteousness; there shall be no injustice, no support of sin, no strife and backbitings; "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." There shall be no more blood-stained battle-fields, nor any broken-hearted widows, for the whole world shall rest under the holy sovereignty of the Prince of Peace.

So, again, it will be the rest of *victory*.

In this respect it is typified by the rest of Canaan, to which the apostle refers in the chapter, for they rested in Canaan, rejoicing in the promise, when the fierceness of their conflict, as well as the toil of their march, was over. This it is which gives to the rest the character of glory, as, *e.g.*, in Isaiah xi. 10. The first feature in the description is that he shall stand as "an ensign of the people," raising high the banner around which his ransomed saints may rally; and the next step is, that "his rest shall be glory." It is far beyond that rest which he had with the Father before the world was, though even that was full of glory. Then there was no enemy, but when the rest cometh, Satan, who now rageth, will be

trampled under foot; then, there was no sin; now sin has raised a whole world into rebellion; but when the rest cometh, that same world will be once more subjected to the will of God. Then there was no Church of the first-born, now he is gathering his little band in the midst of opposition; and when he cometh, there will be the vast multitude adorned as the bride for the bridegroom, and presented as a chaste virgin to the Lord.

And oh! how vastly does it exceed the rest after an earthly victory! There are no laurels here which are not stained with blood, no shout of the conqueror that is not blended with the groans of the dying, or the sob of the widow. But he will carry his little band through the heat of the battle, and not suffer one to perish. There will not be wanting one single follower of the Lamb, nor left upon the battle-field one single child of God. The bravest and the boldest, who had stood in the forefront of the fray, will be before the throne, untouched by the enemy; and the weakest and the gentlest, whose tender spirit had shrunk from the turmoil, will be there likewise, all holding the palm of victory, and all rejoicing in the triumph of their King.

Lastly.—It will be the rest of *satisfied love*. The great joy of that rest appears to consist in

should seem to come short of it." "Let us labour to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." The solemn point in these words is, that they were not spoken to the world, or to the heathen, but to professed believers, to members of the visible Church, to persons bearing the name of Jesus. And do they not teach us, with overwhelming power, that while we look for our rest in Him we must not be resting in the mere externals of religion? There is a wide distinction between the untaught heathen, and the professing Christian; but there is a distinction wider still between the merely nominal believers and the people of God. To enjoy this rest we must be of this latter class, born again of the Holy Ghost, justified in the Lord's righteousness, sanctified by his Spirit, and kept safe in his right hand. And now, brethren, the prize is before us: in a few short years, it may be ours; a little while, yea, perhaps, a very little while, and we may be found with all God's people, perfect before the throne. Shall the hands hang down, then, and the spirit slumber,—shall we be content to sleep at the very time that our heart waketh? Before the throne they rest not day or night in praise, and shall we on earth be content to rest in prayer? We must not rest content with an easy, luxurious, and self-indulgent pro-

fession, as if this were our home, and this our resting-place before God. We must not rest in outward truth, but reach on for the fixed assurance that we are safe in the right hand of the Lord; nor must we rest in past experiences, but be marching on with a progressive faith to victory. There is a mighty work to be done, a deadly enemy to be subdued, a triumphant Captain to be followed, and a glorious rest to be won. Press onward, then, believer; gird up the loins of thy mind, be sober, and hope to the end; nor ever cherish fond dreams of rest till he comes forth in his kingdom, and unites his whole elect in undivided rest before his throne. Then we may all rest without a fear, for he himself shall rest in the midst of us, yea, shall rest in his love, and shall joy over us with singing. The Lord grant that we and our children may be found amongst his people at that day!

LECTURE VI.

THE MELCHISEDEC PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST IN THE PRESENT AND COMING DISPENSATIONS.

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HEBREWS V. 10.

*“ Called of God, an high priest after the order of
Melchisedec.”*

THE discoveries of modern science are great and wonderful. Every part of the book of nature has been searched with eager assiduity, and innumerable secrets have been brought to light. Men, for the first time, have awakened to a clearer sense of the grandeur of the material universe. The heavens have now begun, more wonderfully than ever, to declare the glory of God, and the firmament, in truths never dreamed of by Chal-

dean watchers, sheweth forth his handy work. Mere specks of light, as the stars appear to the untutored eye, have revealed worlds on worlds of surpassing splendour to the gaze of the astronomer; and light itself, the swiftest and most subtle element of nature, has been turned into a celestial plummet by which to fathom the unknown depths of space. The process of discovery has advanced still further. The milky way, a streak of misty light, which seemed once a mere anomaly and imperfection in the clear blue firmament, has disclosed wonders of a still higher order. Our thoughts have been led onward, from stars to starry systems, immensely remote, and from these to other systems still vaster and more immeasurable, until imagination fails in the vain effort to grasp their immensity, and to search out these wonders of the Almighty.

Amidst the brilliance of such discoveries there is danger, lest we should forget the lesson of the Psalmist, when, after celebrating the glory of the firmament, he proclaims the higher and nobler wonders of the word of God. Another volume, still more worthy of deep admiration, is also within our reach; and He who created the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth, hath magnified His word above all His name. It is hard for the peasant, when he gazes carelessly

on the dim streak of light he sees every night in the sky, to credit the wonders of astronomy, which detects in it a system of innumerable worlds. But it is a still harder and higher lesson to believe that a book, which may be found in every cottage, contains truths more glorious than all the discoveries of natural science. Such, however, is the real character of the word of God. Its wonders, though less attractive to worldly hearts, are even greater than those of the starry heavens. Its revelations of human guilt are far deeper than those of geology, though we could pierce down to the earth's centre; while its messages lead our thoughts upward, far beyond the boldest flight of material astronomy, to the very throne of the Majesty on high. Each sentence of our Lord, however simple it may appear, will disclose to more profound meditation a whole world of heavenly truth. Nay, even those sayings which appear perplexing and obscure to our earthly minds, like misty nebulae in the spiritual firmament, are only truths more remote and unfathomable; and await, perhaps, the clearer vision of the world to come, before we can resolve the cluster into its elements, and trace out all its hidden glory.

Such, we may well believe, is the subject which claims our thoughts this evening, "the priesthood

after the order of Melchisedec." The apostle no sooner has mentioned it, than he pauses on the threshold, to reprove the dulness of his fellow-Christians, to quicken their faith and awaken their zeal, to arouse them by solemn warnings, and encourage them by gracious promises, before he ventures to resume his explanation, and lead their thoughts onward into this inner temple of Divine truth. And, indeed, whether we consider the mode of reasoning, from the silence of Scripture, no less than from its express declarations,—the contrast to all the associations of the Levitical economy,—the intimate connexion with the deepest questions of social polity, with the widest views of Providence, and with the highest and noblest views of our Lord himself, in His present exaltation and future kingdom, there is enough to explain the caution of the apostle, and to show that we enter here upon the deep things of God. It is but a poor and imperfect outline which can be offered in one brief discourse, even of the plainer and simpler elements of this Divine message. The full apprehension of its mysteries is reserved, doubtless, for the risen saints in the kingdom of our Lord. "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known." May that Holy Spirit,

who searcheth the deep things of God, assist our meditations, while we consider the typical history of Melchisedec, the antitype and its main features in our Lord himself, the present exercise of his Divine priesthood, and its future manifestation in the kingdom of glory.

I. The whole history of Melchisedec in the word of God consists only of three verses in the Book of Genesis, while the only later allusion is found in one single verse in the 110th Psalm. This may appear, at first sight, a very slender basis on which to found a great doctrine, and rear a vast superstructure of inspired truth. And doubtless, many a Christian may feel secretly disposed to charge the apostle with giving the reins to an unbridled fancy, with drawing inferences very loosely, and using premises of the most uncertain kind. Such must be the view of those who regard the Scriptures of the Old Testament as mere human compositions, and carve and criticise them, where they ought to tremble and adore. They are like the sciolist, who should deride the notion that a falling apple could ever give birth to a true system of the universe; and because he is incapable of following the reasonings of Newton, should renounce with scornful unbelief the sublime discoveries of modern science. But the great apostle does not write

like one uncertain of his argument: he is only doubtful of the capacity of his readers. He pauses long, to stir up their dull faculties, and arouse their spiritual discernment; but when once he resumes the subject, he pursues it with all the steady march of a scientific demonstration. All is calm, connected, and consecutive; and he sums up the glorious result of the whole reasoning, before he passes on to a kindred subject,—the better covenant, and the nobler sanctuary, which are required in the exercise of this higher priesthood, after the order of Melchisedec. Let us trace, if possible, the steps of his reasoning, that we may see clearly the firm and solid basis on which it rests.

Now the first main principle, which is the secret and impregnable foundation of the whole argument, is the unspeakable significance and solemnity of an oath of God. "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." Under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, this one sentence expands into a whole volume of Divine truth. An oath of God is the most solemn and glorious declaration of His unchangeable will. He who has made all the worlds of space, and the myriads of living creatures here below,—He in whose presence ten thousand thousand angels worship

with veiled faces, by such an oath proclaims His immutable will to the whole intelligent universe. Can one syllable in such a message be without the deepest significance? The laws of senates, and the proverbs of philosophers, cannot rival, in fulness of meaning, such a Divine revelation. The Messiah, so God himself hath sworn, shall be "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Therefore the sacred history where Melchisedec is named, however brief and simple, contains the indications of another priesthood, higher than that of Aaron, to be exercised through eternal ages by the Son of God. The words in Genesis, we are thus assured, are no mere accident, due to the choice or fancy of the historian; they are a secret prophecy of the Holy Spirit; they are like a grain of mustard-seed, sown in the garden of Scripture, but of which the spreading branches are to overshadow the whole universe in the ages to come.

Let us now turn to the history to discover those laws of a new and higher priesthood, which the oath assures us it must contain. It instructs us alike by the facts which it relates, and by those which it conceals in silence.

And first, Melchisedec was a priest of the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth. The title alone is very significant. There is nothing

limited or local in such a priesthood. Its object must be the supreme God, in all the extent of His universal dominion, in all the glory of His universal providence. There is nothing in the title which implies a reference to one people, or to one age of mankind. The office of this priesthood must be, what mere philosophy attempts in vain—to raise sinful dust and ashes into communion with the Supreme, the Unsearchable, and the Everlasting; and to convey blessings down to the children of men from the unseen and Almighty Governor of the whole universe.

Again, we are told that Melchisedec met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, and that he received tithes from all the spoil. He is thus placed higher than Abraham himself, and still higher above that Levitical priesthood, which rested all its claims on a natural descent from Aaron. For without contradiction, the inferior receives such a blessing from the superior; but Levi and Aaron virtually paid homage to Melchisedec in the person of their own forefather; and hence the priesthood after the order of Melchisedec must be higher in dignity than that which the law of Moses conferred on the sons of Aaron.

The names of Melchisedec are another feature of the history, which cannot be without meaning.

He is first, by interpretation of his own name, King of righteousness, and next, by interpreting the name of his city, the King of peace. The change in the name of Abraham was the subject of a distinct promise, and contained a blessed prophecy of good things to come. How then should these names of Him, who is represented as greater than Abraham, and who bestowed a blessing on him, be devoid of equal significance? He, therefore, who is a priest in this order, must also be a king, and his royalty must be one of the highest excellence, a dominion of peace and righteousness. The rays of goodness, elsewhere separate, must here be combined in blessed harmony; so that mercy and truth may meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other, and priestly holiness and regal authority are united in one common glory. "He shall sit and rule on his throne, and he shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

Not only the words of the narrative, but its very silence, the apostle proceeds to show, is full of meaning. The parentage of Aaron, his father and mother, his lineal descent, and the rites of his consecration, are all distinctly put on record. His sons obtained the priesthood solely by descent

from him, and when they were removed by death, their priesthood passed away, and was given to others. "They were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death."

In the history of Melchisedec all is different. No mention is made of his earthly father or mother, no line of descent is connected with his name, and neither his birth nor his death appears in the record. He stands before us, invested with priesthood simply by the voice of the Spirit of God; and no hint is given us in the narrative, or in any later message, of a time when his priesthood passed away. Thus, by the very silence of the sacred history, he is made like unto the Son of God, and abideth a priest continually. For Christ our Lord is really all that Melchisedec became relatively, through this Divine art of the record, when it concealed his genealogy, his birth and death, and revealed to us only his high honour as the priest of God. Without father in his human nature, without mother in his Divine person as the Son of God, without descent in his pre-existent glory, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, the same from everlasting to everlasting, because He continueth ever, He exercises an enduring and unchangeable priesthood. "For the law maketh men high priests

which have infirmity, but the word of that oath which was since the law, maketh the Son high priest, who is perfected for evermore."

II. Let us now consider the glorious antitype, or the character of the Melchisedec priesthood, as fully and for ever realised in the person of the Lord Jesus. The history in Genesis, and the oath in the Psalms, alike lead our thoughts to Him, in whom the type is fully satisfied, and that solemn oath completely fulfilled. "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." This priesthood is spiritual in its nature, universal in its application, immutable in its basis, heavenly and glorious in its exercise, linked with kingly authority and perfect righteousness, and lasting and eternal in its continuance.

The priesthood of our Lord is a spiritual priesthood. Unlike the shadowy rites of the law of Moses, it deals with the innermost wants of the immortal spirit, and the highest attributes of the God of holiness. The services of the sons of Aaron stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, or outward purifications of the flesh from ceremonial uncleanness, imposed until a time of reformation. But all the acts of the Melchisedec priesthood are intense realities. The holiness of the priest is a

real holiness, his love is a real love, his atonement a real atonement, and his intercession a real and prevailing intercession. Man and God are separated and at a distance: the true Melchisedec unites their natures in His own person, and the gulf of separation disappears. Man is condemned under the sentence of the law, and by the voice of his own conscience; the true Melchisedec offers in his own life and death a perfect sacrifice and atonement, and the curse of the law passes away, and the burdened conscience is set free. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He needeth not daily to offer sacrifice, like the sons of Aaron, for this he did once for all, having offered himself on the cross. The pardoned and penitent sinner needs daily supplies of grace, to which he has no claim, and daily forgiveness of his many transgressions; the true High Priest ever liveth to make intercession for him. The blessings of the covenant of grace need ever to be applied afresh to the whole Church of God. Our Lord, the true Melchisedec, was parted from his disciples in the very act of blessing them. Since He ascended on high, He continues to dispense those heavenly gifts which are the fruit of His intercession. It is a real cure which He provides for the disease of the soul, a real deliverance from the guilt and

power of sin, which flows from His sacrifice, a real communion of God with the sinner, and of the sinner with God, which results from His advocacy in heaven; His priesthood alone is the true remedy for the ruin of the fall, and the secret of recovered happiness, to all those who have wandered far from God in the ways of destruction and misery.

The Jewish priesthood, in its very nature, was confined to the limits of one single people. On the day of atonement there was no sacrifice for the Gentile world, and the Levitical rites were a high wall of partition, which shut out all other nations from any share in the privilege of those typical offerings. But the priesthood of Christ, being "after the order of Melchisedec," has no such narrow limits; it brings the whole race of mankind into a new relation of love with the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The only distinction of objects which it recognises is a spiritual distinction, free from all reference to mere parentage, race, country, or clime. The atonement of our great Melchisedec is unto all men, and rests with cleansing efficacy upon all those that believe. He intercedes for all transgressors, that the barren fig-tree may be

spared for a season, and fresh means of grace may be afforded, till the time of mercy expires; but more especially he intercedes for those whom the Father hath given him, that they may never perish, but be raised in glory at the last day. The blessings he procures are dispensed largely to all men, but their choicest treasures are given to them that believe. Freedom and diffusiveness are the very characters of this Divine priesthood. He, to whom it appertains, is "able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." How glorious is the provision here made for the wants of a fallen race! What blessed encouragement is here for every penitent sinner! The thunders of the law need terrify no longer, the majesty of the Most High need no longer appal us, and drive us from His presence; the true Melchisedec is the Lord our Righteousness, the Prince and Giver of peace: He lives for ever to plead for our souls, and through Him we may have access, with humble confidence, to the mercy-seat on high.

This priesthood rests also on an immutable foundation. The priests under the law were made without an oath, but our Lord is consecrated by the oath which says to him, "The Lord sware and will not repent: Thou art a priest

for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Thus the glory of Christ, and the blessedness of His people, are each secured by the most solemn sanction which Almighty love and wisdom can devise. An oath confirms the promise to Abraham, and in him to all the faithful: "Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." An oath confirms the promise to the true Melchisedec, by whom alone these blessings are conveyed to believers, and seals to him the glory of an everlasting priesthood. Thus a threefold cord of Divine love is woven, which links together in unchangeable union, the truth of God, the glory of Christ, and the happiness of His people: "Heaven and earth may pass away," but His priesthood can never change, nor cease to be the fountain of richest blessings to all them that believe on His name.

The priesthood of our Lord is heavenly and glorious in the manner of its exercise. If he were on earth he would not have been a priest, since there were earthly priests already, who exercised their office daily at the earthly temple. But this Priest is a minister of the true sanctuary, which the Lord pitched, and not man. He "is gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being subject

to him." In that most holy place he now exercises His Divine priesthood on behalf of all his people; and even when He returns in glory, His priesthood continues heavenly, as before. The Jewish high priest did not always continue in the most holy place, but came out to bless the people. It was his liberty of access to that mercy-seat, not his continual presence before it, which gave him his high prerogative. So, also, our Lord abides the true High Priest for ever, whether his presence be withdrawn for a time within the veil, or whether He appears once more to bless His waiting people. It is enough that He has perpetual liberty of access into the innermost glory of the Father's presence, and has "entered in once" already "into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Again, this priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, implies also the union of kingly authority and perfect righteousness. Wisdom, love, and power are inseparably united in the attributes of the Most High. The offices of the Prophet, the Priest, and the King, are also combined inseparably in our Lord, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. When these offices are intrusted, in a lower and limited sense, to mortal men, they

are distinguished from each other. No single type can express the fulness of the antitype; and no sinful mortal can sustain, without risk of greater evil, the burden of such a threefold honour. The priestly and kingly offices were indeed combined in Melchisedec and the Maccabean high priests; the prophetic and the kingly office in Moses, David, and Solomon, and Daniel; the prophetic and the priestly, in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the forerunner of our Lord. But even here the union was imperfect, and one character was more peculiarly manifest in each instance. In our Lord the union is complete. Power, love, and wisdom, like the colours of light in the rainbow, are perfectly combined in His Divine Person. The great Prophet that was to come into the world, is also the true Melchisedec, and the priesthood that endures for ever is leagued with a kingly power which can never pass away. He has infinite love to intercede for the sinner; but also infinite righteousness to reward and bless His people, and to punish and condemn the presumptuous transgressor. To this great High Priest the message is addressed by the Spirit: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity;

wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

In this distracted and sinful world, the best and wisest government has always been constituted by a balance of different powers. In the Jewish state, the authority of the priests was checked by that of the judges and rulers; the authority of the kings, by that of the priestly order; and both, when they grew corrupt, by the schools of the prophets, and their faithful warnings and exhortations. It is the consistent application of this lesson of universal experience, which forms the excellence of our own constitution. In the authority of the Church, the power of the State, and the mighty influence of the press, we have now a rude and imperfect counterpart of the priestly, the kingly, and the prophetic offices. It is the mutual check of opposing powers, which alone hinders each, in its turn, when exercised by sinful men, from lapsing into the deepest corruption, or growing into the foulest tyranny. But this separation, however wise and necessary in a world of sin, and even there, unnatural and mischievous when carried to its extreme, must cease entirely in the kingdom of our Lord. The true Melchisedec will be for ever a Priest and a King upon his throne. Even his faithful followers, when they rise to share in

His glory, shall partake of His^e high privilege, and be priests and kings unto God and Christ for ever.

Once more: this priesthood, unlike that of Aaron, will be lasting in its continuance. The priests under the law were many, because death put a close to the exercise of their office. But Jesus, our Lord, because He continueth ever, hath a priesthood that cannot be transferred, or pass away. He claims it by no law of earthly descent, but in virtue of that endless life which is His Divine prerogative. As the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself. Thrones and empires may crumble into dust, and, after long ages, only a few relics remain to bear witness of their perished greatness;—the stream of time may hurry generation after generation to the tomb;—human philosophy, ever learning, and never coming to a knowledge of the truth, may run through its own cycle of perpetual changes;—the planets may fulfil their varied courses, and starry worlds and systems mould themselves into new constellations in the immeasurable ages of the future: but thou, O Lord, art the same, and thy years shall not fail. The kingdom of Jesus, our Melchisedec, shall never cease, His priestly glory never expire. Creation, through all its

countless worlds, may toil on in the vast cycle of perpetual changes, which no thought can fathom, and no science explore; but "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." An oath of God, surer than the surest laws of the material universe, is the foundation of His throne, and constitutes the seal to the celestial patent, which consecrates Him the true High Priest for evermore.

III. But let us pass from the priesthood itself to the mode of its exercise, first, in the present dispensation of grace, and next, in the coming dispensation of visible and manifest glory.

The office of the Jewish high priest was always the same; but his actions were various. Sometimes he stood at the incense-altar in the holy place; sometimes, on the Day of Atonement, he entered into the Holy of holies, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy-seat; and again he returned and stood in the outer court of the temple, and there pronounced a blessing on the people. The like difference we may well believe to exist in the exercise of the Melchisedec priesthood. Its essential glory is, and must ever continue, the same; but the special aspect may vary, according to the wants of the Church and the world, and the manifold wisdom of the Divine dispensations. Let us dwell on some of those

peculiar features which mark its exercise in the present age.

The first of these is the fuller manifestation of the priestly, compared with the kingly office. It is true that these, in the person of our Lord, are inseparable. It is as needful that He should be always the true Prophet, Priest, and King, as that God himself should be at all times infinite in power, in wisdom, and in holiness. In the display of these attributes, however, there is a Divine order, so that each of them, in turn, may receive its fullest exhibition. It was during the ministry of our Lord here upon earth, that His character, as the true Prophet, was the most conspicuous. Even those whose unbelieving hearts could not discern in Him the features of their promised King, were compelled to own that a great Prophet was risen up among them, and made the repeated confession,—“This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.” When the hour of His passion approached, His priestly character began to be more fully displayed. He who spake as never man spake, became as a lamb dumb before its shearers, and opened not His mouth. As if to mark the transition, His sacrificial atonement began with a brief season of expressive and solemn silence. From that hour of mute and patient suffering, until the voice of

the archangel shall break the slumbers of the dead, the priestly glory of our Lord, as the Sacrifice, the High Priest, and Intercessor, has been the most conspicuous. Then, in the hour when He returns, having received the kingdom, his regal authority will receive its brightest display. The Son of man will come in his glory, and with all the holy angels, and shall sit on the throne of his glory. All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall do him service. The diadems of the world, so long worn by the usurper, the prince of darkness, shall be restored to the rightful King; and He shall reign until his enemies be made his footstool; and his kingdom, in manifest glory, will endure for ever. At present, as King, he is waiting for that time; but as High Priest, he already fulfils the highest and noblest part of his office. "For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." It is this pre-eminent exercise of priestly intercession which marks the present dispensation of grace. Our Lord is already in the Holy of holies, there pleading for guilty sinners the merits of his own sacrifice; but He still waits with great long-suffering, and has not yet sat down, as King of the nations, upon His throne of judgment.

Another feature of the Gospel dispensation is the continual presence of the High Priest in the most holy place. It answers to that season, in the Day of Atonement, when the sacrifice had been offered, and the blood was brought within the veil, but the priest had not yet returned to bless the people. A secret work of grace was then carried on, unseen by the congregation, on which their thoughts were fixed, and their forgiveness was suspended; and they remained without, praying, in hope and expectation, until the high priest should once again come forth from the sanctuary. He did not, however, lay aside his priestly office, when he returned to bless them, although one special work assigned to him was then complete. He had offered the sacrifice, and sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat. The offering was accepted, and for its sake the people were forgiven.

So is it now with our blessed Lord. He is ever applying the merits of His precious sacrifice to secure the salvation of penitent sinners. Age after age, withdrawn from the eyes of the world, he carries on a secret and mighty work of grace in the presence of his Father. His blood removes the curse from the souls of his people; his secret intercession enriches them with continual gifts of Divine love. Alone in the

heavenly sanctuary, He bears up, by his mighty advocacy, the pillars of a sinking world. By the pleaded virtue of that one sacrifice, a guilty race are continued from year to year, and crowned with mercies; a bound is set to the inroads of sin and misery; society is maintained in peace; nations are upheld in their inheritance of temporal blessings; and returning prodigals are sealed with the signet of love, and clothed in the spotless robe of a Divine righteousness. Every prayer we offer can rise to the throne of God, only in virtue of this priesthood, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Every mercy we receive owns no other source. It comes down from the heavenly mercy-seat, because Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us. The glorious truth may be denied, as well as forgotten. Ungodly men may clamour to have the grace of God blotted out from the title of their rulers, and claim, in their foolish pride of heart, to be themselves the fountain of all authority here below. Alas! how will they endure the change, when the intercession is suspended, that the work of judgment may begin! Then will be seen, with noonday brightness, the power and preciousness of that secret advocacy of love, which sinners have forgotten and despised, when the great High Priest shall come forth from the holy

place, and appear as the King of righteousness, to punish His enemies, and to bless His people.

Again, the present exercise of our Lord's priestly office is marked by His entire separation from a world of sin. Under the law, no man was to be present in the tabernacle during the time of the great atonement. The Nazarite, during his vow, was to touch no dead body or unclean person. Both of these types meet in the history of our Lord throughout the present season of His exaltation. At the last supper He began to take upon him the vow of the Nazarite, when He said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Ever since his ascension, He has not only continued to be the Holy One of God, but is also separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, alone in the highest and innermost abode of the celestial sanctuary.

This separation, with respect to the whole race of sinners dwelling in the flesh, is an evident and certain truth. It is the very pledge of our Saviour's righteousness, which the Spirit of God applies to the conscience of His people,—that He is gone to the Father, and we now see Him no more. How far the statement applies to departed saints, is left in greater obscurity. Types are, in their very nature, imperfect; and here the same type

has two opposite aspects. When we compare the privileges of believers under the Gospel with those of departing saints under the old covenant, then we are told that the veil is rent, the prison-house is unbarred, the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers, and they have boldness of access into the most holy place by the blood of Jesus. They die in the Lord, and depart to be with Christ. But when we compare their actual state with their hopes in the hour of resurrection, the type seems to assume an opposite significance. The souls, even of the martyrs, are still seen under the altar, crying for the full deliverance, and no man is within the sanctuary, while the High Priest sprinkles the blood of atonement, until the work of mercy is complete, and He returns to bless the waiting people. There is a veil of imperfect vision, which must continue, until that which is perfect is come, and that which is in part is done away. There is a barrier of imperfect holiness, which must continue until the whole man, spirit, soul, and body, is presented blameless in the day of the Lord. Even after the ascension of the Lord Jesus, David was not yet ascended into heaven. And thus, amidst the dimness of that light which reveals to us the state of the separate spirits of the just, a double truth may be clearly deci-

phered: that it is an entrance into the holiest of all, compared with the state of the departed righteous under the elder covenant, but still only a waiting under the altar, when contrasted with the privilege of their Great High Priest, who is made higher than the heavens. He alone is now admitted, and pleads the merits of his own sacrifice, amidst the brightness of the incommunicable glory.

IV. But this leads us to our last subject,—the mode in which this priesthood will be exercised when our Lord returns, and the distinctive features it will then assume. We need to approach it with humility and reverence: for how can we expect that our earthly minds can see clearly these deep things of God, or search out the details of that glory which will then be revealed? Yet there are general truths which seem to be plainly taught us, and which may enable us to apprehend some main outlines of the Melchisedec priesthood in the coming dispensation.

And first, we may infer, from many passages, that the kingly office of our Lord will then be pre-eminently displayed. Those titles of our high priest, the King of Righteousness, and the King of Peace, will receive their brightest and fullest exhibition. Now, it is true, he dispenses a Divine righteousness to those that believe, and

enriches them with a peace that passeth understanding. Yet who can look upon the world around us, and say that these glorious epithets of our Lord have already obtained their proper fulfilment? He is now a King, but a King who forbears to execute judgment. He now rules, but in the midst of enemies. He is now the giver of peace, but also the giver of a sword of division. He now bestows an inward righteousness on His servants; but still the world lieth in wickedness; nor is He yet delivered, alas! from the strivings of His own people. But the time is coming when these titles shall be displayed in a manner far more impressive. Then "He will judge the poor with righteousness, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, and He will smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins." Then, also, "the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." The promise will then be openly fulfilled: "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." The King of righteousness will then extend peace to His people like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. "They shall not hurt nor

destroy in all His holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas." The winds and waves of tumultuous anarchy will be hushed into silence. The schemes of worldly pride shall pass away, like the dream of a night vision. The Desire of all nations shall come. The Gentiles shall come from the ends of the earth to worship in the presence of the King of Peace, and shall say, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit." "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him." "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed."

Next, the true Melchisedec will then pronounce a blessing upon His people, in the hour of their victory over all their enemies. We cannot doubt that every part of that brief history is intended to reveal some feature in the glory of Christ and His heavenly priesthood. The apostle recites the fact, and not without a meaning, that Melchisedec "met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him." To what time can this refer, but to that final victory described in the Apocalypse, when the beast, the false prophet, and their followers, are sentenced

and punished, and the saints of the Most High begin to take the kingdom? In that hour, when the tumults of war, and the strife of moral conflict, are succeeded by the Hallelujahs of restored Israel, and the resurrection of the children of God, the true Melchisedec will appear again, in robes of priestly honour and beauty, to bless His followers, and enrich them with the fulness of His love. They will offer Him, not the tithe of earthly spoils, but the full tribute of grateful hearts, and the deep adoration of their perpetual song,—“Salvation unto God that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.” And He will bless them with that heavenly feast, of which the sacramental bread and wine are now the pledges, even with fulness of joy in the presence of their Lord, and pleasures at His right hand for evermore.

But will the intercession of our Lord finally cease, when once He comes forth from the heavenly sanctuary? Such has been the view of many Christians, and hence a strong prejudice against the scriptural hope of His millennial kingdom upon earth. How can there be a further time of probation to generations living in the flesh, when the High Priest has come forth from within the veil and desisted from his work of gracious intercession? But this view has no

warrant in the types of the law, and is opposed to many plain declarations of the Gospel. The Jewish high priest did not intercede once alone, on the day of atonement, although the services of that day were of peculiar importance and solemnity. There were many other times, after he had left the most holy place, and before he entered it again, when he offered gifts and sacrifices for the people. The priesthood of Christ, we are often assured, will last for ever. It continues, even when He sits on the throne of judgment, and must endure throughout the ages of eternity.

It must, indeed, be plain, that the bodily presence of Christ in heaven or on earth has no essential and necessary connexion with His office as the great Intercessor. It was needful, to fulfil the type, and expedient, in order that the source of the blessing might be more apparent, that the gifts of the Spirit should not be poured out until He had visibly ascended on high. It was fitting, to illustrate His majesty, and the secret virtue of His sacrifice, that the heavens should receive Him until the promised times of restitution were begun. But whether He resides in heaven, or returns to earth in His bodily presence, wherever that spiritual body is manifested, which goes and returns at the will of the spirit

like a flash of lightning, the essential glory of His person, the essential worth of His sacrifice, must abide unchangeable, and equally avail for every purpose of Divine love. It was needful that, for a time, His priestly office should receive a distinct and peculiar manifestation. For this end He now abides unseen in the heavenly places, and the Spirit convinces the world of His Divine righteousness, because He is ascended to the Father, and we see Him no more. But it is equally needful, that when He sits on the throne of judgment, He should still be a priest upon His throne, and continue not only a King of righteousness, but a Prophet and High Priest for ever.

Our Lord, the true Melchisedec, will thus intercede for ever for His ransomed people. "The Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will feed them, and lead them to living fountains of waters." As the first-born among many brethren, He will use His own high prerogative of priestly honour, to dispense to them for ever new stores of Divine grace, and lead them forward, by the strong attraction of perfect love, into an ever-widening pasture of heavenly goodness. The Father will delight in them for their own sake when their holiness is complete, for "the Lord taketh pleasure in His people, and will beautify the meek with salvation." But still more will He

delight in them for the sake of that beloved Son, by whose blood alone they have been redeemed, and by whose intercession alone they have been rescued from ruin, and presented faultless in the presence of His own glory. Their continued blessedness needs no further key than the delight of God in that perfect holiness which they have already attained. But that fresh blessings are multiplied upon them, fresh heights of glory attainable, fresh pastures of love given to refresh their immortal spirits,—this may be due solely to the continual intercession of their great High Priest, in whom the Father is infinitely well pleased for evermore. No course of ages will stay this mighty current of Divine love, which flows forth to the happy dwellers of the New Jerusalem, and to all the families of a ransomed universe. This pure river of the waters of life, widening as it flows, clear as crystal, proceeds ever from the throne of God and of the Lamb. The pleaded sacrifice, the priestly intercession of the Son, no less than the love of the Father, is its source for ever.

Here, then, my beloved brethren, we may pause, with this blessed and glorious prospect full in view—the priesthood of the true Melchisedec in the ages to come. Science may discover worlds on worlds without end, and fancy may people

their myriad systems with intelligent beings, all capable of happiness in the knowledge of their Almighty Creator, and thirsting for living waters of peace and joy. Yet even science, with all its noblest wonders, can never rival, much less outstrip, the discoveries of God's holy Word. We cannot say what worlds may be already peopled, or what stars may be slowly preparing to be colonized hereafter, and into what unknown regions our own race may be ordained to spread, by a celestial emigration, in those countless generations of the world to come. But of one thing we may be sure, that the fulness of Christ can never be exhausted, the intercession of Christ can never fail, the priesthood of the true Melchisedec can never pass away. It rests on a basis, compared with which all the wisest constitutions of earthly states are only as empty dreams and passing shadows; a foundation, surer than the mighty law which sustains the planets in their courses, and upholds the vast framework of the material universe. The Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth,—Jehovah, the living and unchangeable God, He hath sworn, and will not repent: "Thou art a priest for ever." Here there is a harbour of refuge from all the stormy waves of this mortal life, and a sure anchor amidst the changes of time. Jesus

lives for ever, and lives to make intercession for His people. Their names are graven on the palms of His hands, and written in characters of light on His breastplate of judgment. He will never cease to intercede within the veil, till the whole Church of the firstborn shall be ransomed from the curse, triumphant over all temptation, and landed safely in the paradise of their Father. And even when that work of recovery is complete, His love will still intercede, that fresh draughts may be theirs from the streams of living water, and fresh pastures be theirs of pure and unfading joy.

May this intercession, my brethren, be our hope and comfort, our resource in times of sorrow, the crown of our rejoicing in every season of refreshment and spiritual gladness! If this Divine work of love were to cease, it would be as if the law of attraction were suddenly to cease in the natural world. The planets would then forsake their courses, and nature rush into dissolution. So also, without this mighty, unseen intercession, the faith of the Church would fail, the world be given over to unbridled wickedness, and all be midnight darkness, hellish guilt, and utter desolation and misery. But, blessed be God! this can never be. The Lord hath sworn, and He will not repent, that Jesus shall be a priest for ever. May each of

us rest on this Rock of Ages, and trust ever to this intercession of our exalted Lord! We may then, with confidence of faith, adopt the words of the Christian poet as the language of our own present and future experience,—

“Fix’d on this ground will I remain,
Though my heart fail and strength decay,—
This anchor shall my soul sustain,
Though earth’s foundations melt away;
Mercy’s full power I then shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love.”

LECTURE VII.

THE POWERS OF THE WORLD TO COME.

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MINISTER OF ST MARY'S CHAPEL, READING

HIBBLS VI. 5

“ And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.”

VERY great and very glorious are the things which Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee, O God of our salvation ! Eye hath not seen them ; ear hath not heard them ; the heart of man hath not conceived them ! But Thou hast revealed them to us by Thy Spirit ; and in the depths of the new man, created after Thee in righteousness and true holiness, is there the foretaste and earnest of the things inconceivable, in the joy unspeakable,—the peace which passeth all understanding—the faith which is the evidence of

the things not seen—the hope which entereth in within the veil—the love which is the actual anticipation of the likeness of God and of the life of heaven.

But are we, therefore, in this life shut up unto these spiritual affections, and precluded from looking onward to the circumstances of a future material condition, when the eye and the ear shall be employed again, and the more perfect beauty of a new creation shall be the meet object for our advanced intelligence and our exalted faculties?

It is true, that, at first sight, not any great deal seems to be stated in Scripture with reference to the detail of our coming condition; and to speculate rashly on what is not revealed would be deeply mischievous, though we cannot feel that it would be altogether wrong to venture some little conjecture, merely from analogy, concerning the circumstances of the world to come from those of the world which now is. But we believe that we are not reduced to this alternative, and that enough may be gathered from the Word of God to give us very considerable insight into what may be depended upon as, in the main, our condition in the coming existence. And we believe, moreover, that, in searching into these things with a humble and humble spirit, we are only acquiring knowledge which God intended for us, and

examining a portion of the "all Scripture" which was designed to be profitable. The ultimate condition of man is a wonderful and important object in the purposes of God; and very great will the result of those purposes be concerning him, both in body and soul. In this result all His love is to issue to them whom He makes His own; and in it such will find themselves, not the spectators merely, but experimentally the subjects of His full and eternal glory.

I. But, to proceed at once to our subject, let us first endeavour to *define and explain the expression*, "the powers of the world to come." And here we feel constrained to differ from many who have commented on our text.

1. "The world (*age*) to come," we shall take for granted, for we have no time to prove it, refers to the millennial kingdom which will succeed this present dispensation; though, of course, we do not confine it entirely to that period; it *may* include also what is to follow.

2. The "powers" of which the apostle speaks, *belong properly to that world or age*, and will be, we may conclude, a *common and ordinary* property of it. In *this age* they are only *tasted*; but still they *had been tasted* by those to whom the apostle was alluding.

3. These powers are clearly connected in some

way with the receiving of the Gospel, and are here mentioned as included in its *privileges*.

4. They are not inseparably connected with *true* faith, because those who have tasted them may fall away; and, indeed, we believe that no feature of character named in this verse and its context implies more, *necessarily*, than a *visible* membership of Christ's Church. We must be content with stating this as our conviction, not being able here to discuss this confessedly difficult passage.

Thus far, therefore, we learn that they are powers properly belonging to the world or age to come,—that is, the millennium, and fully to be developed in that condition as their proper spheres; but still *tasted* here, and that even by mere professors, as a privilege connected with the profession of Christianity.

Nor is it, perhaps, out of place here to notice the illustration and confirmation of the existence of some such powers in the extreme dread and terror which is naturally felt in our present condition in reference to anything supposed to be the result of supernatural or even extraordinary power. A terrific storm, or violent wind, or more particularly an earthquake, or the supposed apparition of a departed spirit, or any imagined miraculous occurrence,—nay, even some *natural*

event, viewed in the light of an ominous indication, seems at once to give such a sensation of nearness to the unseen world, that even a mighty and resolute soul has withered into weakness and despondency under this mysterious agency. Nor are such experiences, which few probably have been wholly without, to be looked upon as purely fanciful and entirely destitute of truth; but rather as the significant intimations of what exists behind the veil, and anticipations of a power yet to be universally felt in the full development of good and evil.

5. But can we learn anything of the expression, "*powers?*" This precise word in the plural number occurs *twenty-five* times in the New Testament, not including the text,—namely, *three* times in the phrase, "the powers of heaven;" *twice* as designating *an order of angels*; and *twenty* times with distinct reference to miracles and miraculous agency; and, we may add, in special connexion with the operation of the Holy Ghost, as promised in the New Testament dispensation. Of these twenty times, eight times it is translated "*miracles*," and twelve times (with the exception of two very slight variations of phrase), "*mighty works*."

Now, as it cannot mean either *the powers of heaven* or *angels* in the passage before us, we can

only give it the third interpretation, unless we invent an arbitrary sense: which is done by many. It is true, they produce a measure of authority for their exposition; for they take the word to be precisely the same as if it were in the singular number, and expound it of the power or influence which a future life has upon this present one. Our answer is, that the plural word "powers" must reasonably be considered as used intentionally; and, moreover, that the word in the singular is also employed in the very same sense as that to which almost universally the use of the plural word is restricted.

In the following passages, for instance, the *singular* word is applied to miraculous power, to the coming kingdom of Christ, and to the resurrection and its circumstances.

To *miraculous powers*, in—

Luke vi. 19: "There went *virtue* (or *power*) out of Him, and healed them all."

Luke viii. 46: "I perceive that *virtue* (or *power*) is gone out of me."

Mark vi. 5: "He could there do no *mighty work* (or *power*).

To *the coming kingdom*, in—

Mark ix. 1: "Till they see the *kingdom* of God *come* with *power*."

Matt. xii. 30: "They shall see the Son of

man *coming* in the clouds of heaven with *power* and great glory."

2 Pet. i. 16: "We made known unto you the *power* and *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ."

To the *resurrection*, in—

Rom. i. 4: "Declared to be the Son of God with *power* . . . by the *resurrection* from the dead."

1 Cor. vi. 14: "God hath both *raised* up the Lord, and will also *raise* up us by His own *power*."

1 Cor. xv. 43: "It is sown in weakness; it is *raised* in *power*."

We should say, therefore, that the expression, "*powers* of the world to come," might by no means improperly be replaced by the phrase, "*miracles*," or "*mighty works*" of "the world to come," if uniformity of translation be adopted. But we believe the first word to be the more correct one in this passage, as being rightly the more general term.

6. Now, all this precisely answers to the previous results of our examination of the expression in our text; for,—

(1.) *Miraculous powers*, or, to speak more generally, *the gifts of the Spirit*, were conferred upon many, in the first age of Christianity, as a *privilege connected with receiving the Gospel*.

(2.) They were but *tasted* by the Church at that time; that is, they never became a matter of habitual experience to any individual, much less of universal experience to the Church at large.

(3.) They might be possessed by those *who had no saving faith*, as we learn from our Lord's statement concerning such as might prophesy, and cast out devils in His name, and yet be rejected of Him; as also from Paul's discourse on charity. (1 Cor. xiii.)

(4.) Whereas *power* is specially connected with the *resurrection*, and, in the text, with *the world to come*, we know that the resurrection of the saints is the opening event of that world, and, we may add, will be accompanied by an infinitely larger outpouring of the Spirit than has yet occurred, and with mightier and more universal manifestations.

An objection is likely to be made here, that this appears a very limited interpretation of the expression, and that we, at any rate, do not taste these powers now.

To this we might answer, that there is no necessity that every point in the apostle's appeal to the early Church should precisely suit our circumstances; and, moreover, it is a fact, that here and there, in the Epistles, the argument is

concerned with those very gifts which we no longer possess.

But our real reply to the objection is, that visible miraculous power is more especially mentioned, as being, from its very nature, most prominent and palpable; but that it is not *exclusively* intended. What could be perceived by the senses, would, of course, more easily fix the attention: and it is remarkable that the apostle, in enumerating the gifts and operations of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 1 – 11), dwells almost exclusively on external manifestation, or what amounts to it; for he mentions the *word* of wisdom, the *word* of knowledge, faith (which here cannot mean saving faith), healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation. But while the outward and visible part of the Spirit's working would naturally draw most attention, and might, perhaps, be possessed equally by mere professors and real Christians, no doubt, in both these classes, the inner, unseen mind and intelligence were not without corresponding effects resulting from the power of the Spirit; and, beyond all this, without doubt, there was a *more inward* and *spiritual* counterpart to this visible power, of far more worth than all the rest, possessed *only* by the *true* believer, even by

him in whom the Spirit dwelt as the actual earnest of his inheritance, and through whom he was enabled to be crying continually, in the depths of his soul, "Abba, Father."

To sum up, then, our statement thus far, the powers of the world to come connect themselves specially with the *manifestation and working of the Holy Ghost*; and apply *primarily and specially* to the *wonderful agency* which that Holy Spirit will exert in relation to the *resurrection body* in the *millennial glory*, including, doubtless, *the advance of mind and intelligence* corresponding to the machinery with which the soul will be furnished, as well as *the fullest indwelling of the love of God* of which the renewed creature will be capable.

And the manifestation of these powers, which has already taken place under certain forms and circumstances, may therefore, if examined into, furnish both types and analogies of what we are yet to expect.

II. Let us proceed, then, to examine *what can be ascertained concerning any such powers from the past history and experience of the Church of Christ, since the beginning of the world*, as contained in the Scriptures.

1. We have, then, some very remarkable statements as to the *connexion of the Holy Ghost with*

the material creation, and with man, as the creature of God, originally placed over it.

In the beginning, "the *Spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. i. 2); and "by His *Spirit* He hath garnished the heavens" (Job xxvi. 13); so that the beauty and order of the *world around us* is to be traced to the *Spirit's* marvellous working.

Farther, as regards *man*, it is said: "The *Spirit* of God hath made me, and the brèath of the Almighty hath given me life." (Job xxxiii. 4.) And, in reference to the "Second Man," "the Lord from heaven," it was said of the Virgin (Matt. i. 20), "That which is conceived in her is of the *Holy Ghost*," as it was also said to her (Luke i. 35), "The *Holy Ghost* shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God;" and to this we may refer the passage, "a body hast Thou prepared me." The fashioning of the body is thus connected with the Holy Spirit.

Our bodies, too, are said to be the *temples of the Holy Ghost*, which is in us; and on this is founded the special argument against the body's defilement.

Again, the sudden and immediate *translation of the body* from one place to another is distinctly attributed to the *Spirit of God* in His Word (1 Kings xviii. 12; 2 Kings ii. 16), and stated to have actually so taken place in the case of Ezekiel and of Philip: and the same account is given of that supernatural strength with which Samson rent the lion; and he and others wrought so many mighty and miraculous deeds.

The *miracles of healing* wrought upon the bodies of men by our Lord and His apostles, in the endless variety of their diseases, are especially connected in Scripture with the agency of the *Spirit*. Jesus Himself said, "I cast out devils by the *Spirit of God*;" and the apostles repeat the same thing when they tell us, that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with *the Holy Ghost* and with *power*: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; for God was with Him."

Many of the gifts, too, of the Spirit, already enumerated, consisted either in power exerted through the body and manifested by it, as in the speaking with tongues; or in power exerted upon the body, as in raising the dead.

And in regard to the *resurrection* of the body, it would not be difficult to show, that at least in

our Lord's case, this took place as well through the power of the Holy Ghost as by His own power. (See Rom. i. 4.)

But there is no occasion to omit here other instances of such powers, in which, though the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, still His agency was clearly manifested.

To what else, for example, can we ascribe the operations of that faith which the apostle so largely commends in the Epistle to the Hebrews? Surely, in the many whom he there enumerates, who "out of weakness were made strong," we behold some foreshadowing at least of the powers of which we are speaking, and some slight glimpses of what may be the ordinary capabilities of our glorified condition.

2. This *power* of the Spirit, which we have thus traced in reference to *the body*—in which, as might be expected, it is most evident—extends, however, also to the *mind* and *intelligence* by which the body is directed.

"I have filled Bezalcel," said the Lord to Moses, "with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship."

Thus that same Holy Spirit who reduced creation to its order, arranged all the fashioning of His outward tabernacle, and the minute embellishment of the altar and the ark and the candlestick: while it is nevertheless He who worketh in the soul the more precious faith, and clothes His saints with the brighter jewels of His heavenly graces, making them here vessels meet for the Master's use, as they shall be hereafter the perfected vessels of His eternal glory.

In the case of the seventy elders (Numb. xi.), this same Spirit was given, to enable them to bear along with Moses the burden of guiding and judging the people, manifesting in them instantly the gift of prophecy, as a visible proof of the fulfilment of the promise, and putting us strikingly in mind of what occurred subsequently in the first age of Christianity.

To Saul, the king of Israel, the Spirit was given for much the same object, and with similar outward results; an instance remarkably illustrative of the distinctness, and oftentimes separation, of gifts and grace, to which we have already alluded.

And in the gifts and workings of the Spirit, as specified in the New Testament, we find *universal teaching*,—He shall teach you all things: *enlarged memory*,—He shall bring all things to your remem-

brance: *prophecy*,—He will show you things to come: *increase of intelligence*,—"He searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God:" revealing them to us.

3. In His farther work on the *spiritual* man, in conveying life, in shedding abroad the love of God in the heart, in renewing us after the image of God, in strengthening us in the inner man, in sealing us as the Spirit of adoption, in making intercession with our spirits and witnessing with them, in being the earnest of our inheritance,—in all these His gracious and wonderful operations, He is so well known by the Church, and, through God's mercy, now so distinctly recognised in our Evangelical teaching, that we need not dwell at length upon such topics. We are only anxious that, while we bring forward views not so generally entertained, and which therefore require to be more copiously handled, it may not for one moment be supposed that we exclude from "the powers of the world to come" the highest possible advancement of the *spiritual* man in *heavenly affections*, as well as in material instrumentality and intellectual capabilities.

III. But we must now attempt to acquire a *somewhat detailed view of what "the powers of the world to come" may be expected to be*, as far as the above review of Scripture, and a legitimate

use of analogy may guide us, especially taking into account any statements in the Word of God relating expressly to our future condition, or explanatory of it.

1. Adopting, therefore, the previous order, we take up these powers, *first*, in connexion with the *resurrection body*.

And here we are reminded of the express statement of the apostle, that the body is "sown in weakness, but raised in *power*:" by which we understand, a contrast of the *conditions* of the body in its death and resurrection; but we have no reason to suppose that there must be a total alteration of form, or totally different faculties. Rather, it is implied, that we shall possess in the highest perfection every endowment which we have at present—and, it may be, others besides—*which can be needed*, to render complete the material structure. Let us dwell on this a little.

(1). The *eye*, for instance, will no longer be limited in capacity as to the extent or strength of its vision. Seeing Him, whom not having seen we love, will not be fulfilled merely by the mystic contemplation of the inner man, but will involve infinitely more than any past glimpses of His glory which holiest men of old are recorded to have been blest with.

Is there not enough now of enjoyment in the

vision of what is beautiful, to afford some slight conjecture of what, if the eye still exist, it will be capable of in its more perfect construction? And are there no intimations that there are objects in reserve that shall meet to the fullest satisfaction, and in all the largeness of inexpressible delight, those extended capabilities?

When Moses and the elders saw the God of Israel, and there was, as it were, the paved work of a sapphire-stone under His feet, and the body of heaven in clearness;—when Isaiah beheld His glory, with His train filling the temple;—when Daniel saw His face as the appearance of lightning, and His eyes as lamps of fire;—when the apostles saw Him on the mount, His face shining as the sun, and His raiment white as the light;—and John beheld Him in Patmos, His eyes as a flame of fire, and His feet like burning brass;—and all, more or less, needed supernatural sustaining to endure the overwhelming vision;—is not that same LORD reserved as the concentration of all manifested loveliness and grace and beauty for the unshrouded gaze and unblinking eye of our perfected humanity? “As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness:” “When He shall appear we shall see Him as He is:” and the sight that has been quenched by looking at the faint expression of His glory, even in the central

sun of our universe, shall bear to behold, unclouded and unscreened, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person.

The opening of the eyes of the prophet's servant may teach us also how, through the increased power of vision, much more may be revealed to us, which already closely surrounds us, while it cannot be too much to expect, that all, and more than what we have gained by the discoveries of science in aid of our present vision, will, in the constitution of our glorious body, be within the range of its ordinary and unaided faculties.

Nor do we confine our expectations even to this: the *moral* power of the eye is great even here, and well understood: and, as we recollect, a memorable instance is on record of the power of a single glance from a dishonoured Saviour on a timid and backsliding disciple. Of such influence for the controlling of evil there will be no need; but surely it cannot be easy to overrate the enhancement of delight and blessing which must for ever be circulating by such an instrumentality through the infinite myriads of heaven's glorified society.

That other senses will be quickened to the extent required for deriving the fullest gratification from a restored world, we can have no doubt;

but we need not here dwell on them particularly. We pass rather to another class of perfectness, more especially connected with our *intercourse* in the future condition.

(2.) There would appear to be no probability of a continued *diversity* of tongues; for the apostle plainly states that tongues shall cease; but we can scarcely conceive of a bodily condition without a *language*; nor, excepting by a highly figurative interpretation, can we otherwise explain the scriptural statements which involve the fact. The apostle, when rapt into paradise heard unspeakable words which man cannot utter; and when, in apocalyptic vision, the Lamb stood on Mount Zion, surrounded by the harpers harping with their harps, they sang, as it were, a new song before the throne; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand of those redeemed from the earth. Paradise, then, and heaven, it would seem, have their language. Here, much of inward consciousness lacks its expression, and many a conception its utterance; but hereafter emotions, instead of losing, will gain by translation into language, and the voice will never be feeble in clothing with its heavenly music the finest and deepest feelings of the soul. Here, the frame sinks in weakness under the thrill of a few enchanting sounds, and feels inadequate to sustain

the gratification, just in proportion to the consciousness of its intensity. There, it will be able to endure, nay, to enjoy, the entrancing peal of the hymn and the rapturous shout of the hallelujah, while heart shall pass to heart its warm thought and holy fellowship in language retaining the freshness and enhancing the fascination of its innermost conceptions. Nor can the intercourse be restricted to the utterance; the very expression of the countenance which shall accompany it will add its version of the inner being and speak at once its intelligence and its love. In short, as man has been created for fellowship, and the Church is but one family, of which the very essence is membership, and to which communion is necessary, so we are taught to expect the removal of all the present hinderances to unreserved intercourse, and to anticipate the most unrestricted communication of our advanced experience. During our Lord's sojourn upon earth we find occasional intimations of the influence which His benign address and language produced on those about Him. The people "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." The officers who were sent to take Him replied, "Never man spake like this man." His look of indignation upon the Pharisees, and of tenderest remonstrance upon Peter;

His beholding Jerusalem with tears,—His sighing and weeping at the grave of Lazarus, which made even the Jews exclaim, “Behold how He loved him;” or, on the other hand, His heavenward look in breaking the bread, His striking attitude and expression in performing that same action at Emmaus, which instantly discovered Him to the two disciples, and the glory of His countenance on the Mount of Transfiguration; all these things show how Jesus used the instrumentality of the body for manifesting emotion and producing impression, and sufficiently warrant, as we think, our anticipation of the infinitely perfect adaptation of the spiritual body, for representing and conveying, both by expression and language, the complete transcript of the inner man, as far at least as our happiness can be promoted thereby.

(3.) *The power of transferring the body from one place to another* in no sensible time would appear indicated also as a feature in the powers of the coming condition. The rapture of Philip, the translation of Enoch and Elijah, and our Lord’s ascension, whom we look at in this particular as *the typical man*, all give us this intimation. The facility, too, with which our Lord at any time withdrew Himself from His enemies, or introduced Himself to His disciples, teaches us at least what may be; and if it be said all this was

especially miraculous, we answer, it was enabling the body to overcome the imperfection of its present limitation, and only bringing it up to that independence of local circumstances, which must be reasonably expected in a spiritual body. The velocity with which light and other subtle components of our present universe are transferred from place to place, at least suggests that our renewed frame may be capable of something similar; especially when we are conscious in daily life of the advantage gained by any approach, though still at an infinite distance, to the annihilation of time and space.

(4.) *The condition of the body for effort* must surely be another point in which the power of our risen life will be manifested.

Here the wear and tear of the material is inseparable from the exertion either of mind or body; and to how little is the mere brute force of an individual equal! The strength too, which is little, is still further impaired by disease; and ordinary fatigue and exhaustion is increased by actual derangement of the machinery. For a little while, perhaps, the very exercise of the bodily faculties produces its own enjoyment, and the whole frame gathers refreshment from the very act of circulating the animal health. But, saying, "the keepers of the house tremble, and

the strong men bow themselves;" "the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken." Then, on the other hand, the strength shall be unimpaired, the power inexhaustible, the joy uninterrupted, the satisfaction an everlasting fulness. All that weakens energy or damps effort shall be over. They shall indeed *serve* Him day and night in His temple; they shall not be loiterers, or sit lost in merely contemplative adoration; but, nevertheless, there shall be neither exhaustion nor sorrow: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; the Lamb . . . shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

(5.) Perhaps, however, the widest sphere in which the powers which we are considering will be manifested in the body, will be in *the subjection of the material world to the will and operation of the risen man*. We quite admit, that, in reference to the previous points we have handled, there is no great amount of *explicit* scriptural information, though we trust we have not, for lack of this, ventured farther than intimations and analogies have fairly warranted; but as to the point now before us, the very expression itself, "the *powers* (*miracles, or mighty works*) of the world

to come," opens a wide field of scriptural illustration, as must be evident from the explanation of it already given. And here again we consider our Lord Jesus Christ as *the typical man*, as well as *the head of the body*, His Church. In the *latter relation* He possesses an energy whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself, and this He in a measure communicated to His apostles and others when He gave them authority over unclean spirits and power to work all miracles. In the *former relation* He Himself manifested the operation of that energy, and by the finger of God casting out devils, and healing diseases, and working other miracles, shewed the power in His own person, which His apostles and others also exercised; and in doing which they, in one respect at least, tasted the "powers of the world to come." Hence we look for the ordinary occurrence in that condition of what has been extraordinary in the present. What was done by Jehovah and His prophets under the old dispensation, and by our Lord and His apostles under the new, will be but within the range of common incidents in the future world, as occasion may arise for its fulfilment. To heal the sick, or to raise the dead, if under any circumstances such acts may be necessary; to calm the wind and to quiet the sea; to turn the water into wine, or to heal that which

is bitter; to multiply the bread, or to turn the poison to food; to walk upon the water, or make the iron to swim; to stop the mouths of lions, or to quench the violence of fire:—these, and many other wondrous things scattered over the Church's past history, will, we doubt not, be then possible and practicable in an ordinary way in connexion with the risen glorified body: or, in other words, without going so far as to say that this or that precisely will happen, the whole material universe will be, to every needful extent, an instrumentality by which man, in the perfected circumstances of his resurrection life, will alike receive blessing himself, and have it in his power to communicate it to others.

2. But “the powers of the world to come” as tasted here imply, as we have seen, *increase of intelligence hereafter, and the perfecting of the intellectual faculties.*

The word of wisdom in that day will be no constrained or involuntary utterance of which the utterer knows not the meaning, nor the word of knowledge, the unconscious statement of one who can instruct others and know but little himself; the one will *thoroughly know*, and the other be *thoroughly wise*. And this will, doubtless, comprehend an infinitely higher mental power than we are now capable of exerting. How soon

is the mind, in our present condition, brought to a stand in its reasonings and calculations; how very imperfect is its insight into results; how unable is it to combine to any extent the manifold considerations necessary in arriving at right conclusions, or just inferences! How is our knowledge of good and evil perplexed, and our judgment often at fault, or weak and erroneous; how many are the points within the verge of our mighty redemption, where it is our delight to feel that faith, and not intellect, is the mean of our possessing in them any saving interest! Truly *here*, we see *through a glass, darkly*; we know *in part*: *there*, however, it will be face to face; we shall know even as we are known. Nor can we suppose that our mental penetration will not extend to the deep and wondrous secrets of the material creation. Those hitherto with such difficulty elicited, and still so imperfectly known, will appear scarcely as one step in our acquaintance with the marvellous fabric of our world. "The works of the Lord" will be still "sought out of all them that *take pleasure therein*;" and, instead of a deeper *knowledge* lessening their marvellousness, or detracting from their beauty, it will afford but the more just estimate of the unsearchable wisdom in which He hath made them all.

Probably, too, higher providences will ex-

ercise higher faculties of contemplation, and deeper responsibilities more exalted capacities for duty and service. Memory will not be treacherous, nor recollections faint; the past will recur to the fullest extent in which it can add to our blessing, and the future lie open enough to preclude all anxiety and hesitation.

3. And what shall we now say as to the development of these powers and their full experience in the future condition of the *spiritual* man? Thanks be to God, they are tasted here; but how from their weakness in time shall we measure their strength in eternity? But it is not *all* weakness, even now. The power of the resurrection life is felt and known even here; and if in the mighty struggle of this fleshly condition it triumphs notwithstanding, what shall not be the issue when all antagonism is at an end?

Indeed, the future blessedness can be but the increase and consummation of *our present* blessedness. Even *now* the renewed soul possesses the felicity of heaven, in all its essential qualities; and the future life is its life *now*, only not *fully* comprehended, nor *fully* attained.

What power can be more mighty than that which brings into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ?—which quickens us when we are dead in trespasses and sins, and raises us

up in victory, and of that mighty *power* by which the Father raised up Jesus, and will raise them up by Jesus. What must not their endowments then be under such conditions of privilege?

(1.) To see Christ as He is,—to behold His glory,—to find their dwelling-place in the neighbourhood of His throne, and in that city where there is no need of the sun, because the Lord God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof,—will surely need *the eye of power* and a *vision* that cannot be either dimmed or daunted. And the faculty that can bear this will doubtless be able also to fulfil its office in scanning everything, however distant, and inspecting everything, however minute, within the mighty range of that universe which will then be the province of the saints. While, beyond all this, if, as we most certainly believe, there is to be there the recognition of each other amongst the redeemed family, the eye will once more be needed as the organ; and well shall it fulfil its office, lighted, as it then will be, with the beam of unerring truth, and the charm of intensest heavenly affection.

Nor should it be forgotten, that this, and other senses of the spiritual body, will not be needed merely for our own happiness, but for the purpose of fulfilling our government over the

world, and our communication with its inhabitants, of which we shall speak presently.

(2.) Hence, also, as we have seen reason to believe that there will be *language*, so it will not be without its use. The utterance of heaven's song must be unwearied and everlasting. Who can imagine a spirit, accustomed here, when the fire kindled, to speak with its tongue, mute, under the ravishment of such glories, and in the midst of such a throng? If voice can swell the blessing or heighten the praise, voice will be there, and in the visits of the saints to earth and their administration of its economy. be employed in telling of heavenly things to those who have not yet attained them. Heaven and earth will probably then be of one speech; the former, perhaps, employing an infinitely higher dialect than the latter; the Spirit concentrating the power, once manifested in *many* tongues, in that *one* heavenly language which shall best utter all thoughts, and render up all praise.

(3.) The power of instantaneous *translation through all space*, will not only find its use in attendance on our Lord and His immediate service, but in that visitation of the earth which is likely to be often repeated under its promised circumstances. As angels in former times had their commission, so it is to be expected will the

saints also, in reference to the guidance and judgment of those over whom they reign : while,

(4.) For the fulfilment of this heavenly ministration, as well as the untiring service and worship of their King, they will need *a strength which never decays*, and an energy which never flags, inexhaustible even by the intensity of their happiness ; unconsumed, notwithstanding the ardour of their love.

(5.) And in this state of things, *the unlimited use of, and power over, all the material universe*, will only be consistent with their condition in a material body, for *material* it will be, though *spiritual* ; and what we term usually miraculous powers may be exercised either for the adaptation of the world to their own will and happiness, or for the blessing and welfare of those over whom they reign.

2. The scope for the exercise of enlarged *intellectual* power will, in that world, of course, be ample. As it is in our world, now, there is infinitely more than we can penetrate or understand ; and in the new heavens and new earth, we cannot but expect that the wisdom and power of our God should clothe themselves with still greater glory and marvellousness.

But still more will intelligence be needed for the offices the saints will have to fulfil. We have

already hinted at the dominion they shall exercise in reigning over the earth ; but we must remember that this is not an incidental, but a primary object in the coming life. “ Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world ? ” “ Know ye not that we shall judge angels ? ” And if the seventy elders required special wisdom for their duty ; if the deacons needed to be men full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom for their office, how much more *they*, who shall be set over the five or the ten cities, and who shall have to direct the economy of the world to come in its righteousness and true holiness ?

We are too apt, perhaps, to suppose that the holiness and regularity of the coming dispensation, in regard to those in the flesh, will be the result of a mere mechanical spirituality, in which there shall be no liberty, and from which, therefore, there can be no deviation. There would thus appear to be not the least scope for the exercise of administrative wisdom on the part of the saints ; in short, their kingship could only, in this case, be nominal. But have we any real ground for such a supposition ? In the orders of angels, as far as we know them, are there no services and no employments ? Do they not minister now on our behalf ? Are they not to be subject to us hereafter ? Is government only for

the punishment of the evil-doers, and not for the praise of them that do well? Is authority necessary only where sin is to be restrained, and not where righteousness is to be promoted? Surely amongst the orders of heaven and the people of the earth, even in the coming glory of the new condition, we cannot conceive of anything short of a mighty stirring activity of busy holiness; and, amidst all the variety which must still exist in the endowments of mind and body, we can, without much difficulty, imagine, if not the absolute necessity, at least the infinite value of a series of presiding minds, through all the gradations heavenly and earthly, under which all intelligences, from the lowest to the highest, being marshalled, shall fulfil their untiring service to their King and to each other. And such a presiding order will be found in the resurrection saints; angels and the world being subjected to their judgment: for they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Then shall the kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

The very instructions, too, which they will

have to impart, must necessarily involve interpretations, both of the providence and truth of God, of His character and revelations. Error of statement, or opposition of sentiment, must be unknown in those heavenly hierophants; while to communicate truth in a way that shall be effective and satisfactory, will require in themselves the most accurate knowledge and the clearest intelligence. As we have seen above, angels themselves are to be under the government of the saints; and if the former are to learn from the latter the manifold wisdom of God, now must those saints most clearly comprehend it themselves, to be able fully to expound it to creatures of such surpassing faculties! The glass which they would present to others, formed of the materials of their own experience, must be free from specks and mistiness: the riddle they would read to others, they must have solved themselves.

And if, moreover, what has passed, or is passing here, is to give its impress to what is to come,—if the life present is the seed-time of which our eternity will be the fruit season,—then, for their own blessing, as well as with a view to the instruction of others, must memory faithfully recal the faintest as well as the strongest impressions of a

past existence, and trace the vindication both of providence and grace in the eternal results.

3. The congruity of such powers with the coming age, in reference to *the full endowment of the spiritual man*, need hardly be insisted upon. All the manifestations of God's physical and moral power are based upon righteousness and linked with truth; and it must be the same in the case of any creature, as far as he becomes the habitual and willing instrument of similar manifestations.

To possess eternally such mighty powers and such exalted intelligence, implies, as a necessary law, the closest conformity of character to that of God. It may be thought, that, in describing the coming universe as subjected so entirely to the saints, we have been placing materials unconditionally in their hands of which the most arbitrary use might be made. But, after all, the powers of the world to come, in their deepest spirituality, lie at the root of all the rest. The soul must be first quickened and reconciled before it can become an heir of the resurrection life in glory. Sonship must exist here, to be completed and manifested there. And in that likeness to God, which shall in that day be spiritually and morally, and we may add (inasmuch as we shall

be like Christ), corporeally perfected, consists the only capacity for the eternal enjoyment of the resurrection condition, or for the fulfilment, in God's grand future economy, of the resurrection office. Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for *they* shall see God.

4. We have stated that there will be another class in the millennial dispensation, namely, those in the flesh, who may partake, in some subordinate degree, of the powers we are treating of. We need allude but very briefly to these.

Their physical strength must be much greater, and more sustained from their life being so much prolonged; and disease would appear to be unknown among them, except as a judicial infliction. Dominion over the inferior animals will be restored, and man thus be reinstated in the headship of creation. Intelligence in the use of the material world will also be much enlarged, as the objects to which it will be devoted will be more glorious. The Temple of the coming age (Ezek. xl.) cannot be inferior, in materials or workmanship, to anything that is past; and equity and righteousness, in the administration of rule, will correspond with the purity and magnificence of the worship. But, above all, "I will pour out," saith the Lord, "my Spirit upon all flesh." And again: "I will

pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." And inasmuch as the fulfilment of this at Pentecost was but the early rain, and only a tasting by the Church of power, when it shall have its plenary accomplishment in the coming age, as it certainly will, we cannot but look for its parallel in an infinitely higher measure. Whatever, therefore, the condition of Jews and Gentiles at that time in the flesh shall need for the fulfilling of all the glory so distinctly promised in the prophetic Word, whether miraculous or ordinary, shall doubtless be vouchsafed. If miraculous gifts be needed, they shall be given; if that diversity of the Spirit's operation, which we can scarcely believe to have expended itself in that brief manifestation which is past, be necessary for the enjoyment of that condition, it shall be granted. But, above all, "the earth shall be full of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" the people shall be all righteous; holiness shall be upon the very bells of the horses; the earth shall be the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the round world, and they that dwell therein. And in fellowship with God, and intercourse with the risen saints, shall man again find his blessing, and feel his strength, mighty in comparison of what he now is, for the contemplation

of God, and in the service of God, though in expectation of, and training for, a higher and more perfect inheritance.

V. We proceed briefly *to sustain the view we have taken of the powers of the world to come*, as referring, in a great measure, to the resurrection life, in connexion with the material universe, *by some important considerations.*

1. Our connexion with materiality is not to be considered a trifling or subordinate matter, or looked upon as a necessarily imperfect condition. It is natural, indeed, to think so, *first*, from the great limitation of our present circumstances; and, *secondly*, from the sin and corruption which are so intimately mingled up with them. But, as far as the Word of God gives us any light, an exclusively spiritual condition would be the imperfect one, and a material condition that which superadds the capacity for an infinitely increased amount of enjoyment and glory. Accordingly, the intermediate state is treated of as a parenthesis, and the resurrection is ever presented as the end of our hope.

2. The excellency of the visible creation at first is dwelt upon in terms the most remarkable: "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." His complacency was perfect. And if a cloud has come over that world

of beauty, still He has taken special care to tell us that remedy is possible, and renewal is in reserve; for He will create "new heavens and a new earth," wherein dwelleth righteousness, and once more rejoice in the work of His hands. What may be the extent of progression, in His purposes towards His redeemed creatures, in the unrevealed mysteries of a coming eternity, we neither know from Scripture, nor can we gain anything by conjecture apart from all analogy. As far as we do know the history of our coming existence, union with materiality is predicted and appears necessary; and while by its corruption and its burden the flesh is ever working groans and weariness, and we know that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," still the alternative is not *the putting off* of everything material, but *the putting on* of a body spiritual and incorruptible. And inasmuch as *manifestation* is so inseparably connected with what is material and visible, and through such instrumentality, as far as we can tell, the sublimest conceptions of the intellectual and spiritual faculties can alone be communicated, we are not to be considered as placing the spiritual life in an inferior or secondary position, because we maintain the necessity of its material furniture; on the contrary, that well of everlasting life, which

the grace of God makes to spring within the soul of every elect one, is exclusively *the* life and light and power and glory ; and the intellectual faculties and the corporeal structure are but the channels and instruments, through which the true deep life of God's love in the soul is manifested and circulated, multiplying infinitely the blessedness of each one of its possessors by an infinite vicissitude of giving and receiving.

We deem, therefore, that, while "the powers of the world to come," taken in their clear scriptural meaning, are, as we believe, what we have expounded them to be, this exposition is further confirmed by what is stated of God's purposes, which ever connect us with a *material* (not, be it remembered, *sensual*) condition, with which, nevertheless, is combined the highest advancement in spirituality.

And here I close my attempt at the *exposition* of my subject ; having only a few words to add as to its *practical application*. What your impression may have been, I know not ; but I have never felt more my utter inadequacy, than in treating this wondrous theme. I would only hope that these statements may stimulate others to a more full examination of these animating topics ; and that a few seeds may have been

dropped in the course of our inquiry, feeble as it has been, which may grow up hereafter in yourselves and others unto fruit and blessing.

We conclude, then, with a few remarks of inference and application.

1. How grateful is it to the child of God to contemplate his coming glory in such close connexion with the glory of the *Holy Ghost*, as well as of Christ and the Father! His miraculous manifestations having ceased so long, and knowing Him only in the preciousness of His spiritual unction, we are too apt, perhaps, to disconnect Him from the promised blessedness of our future life. But He is the earnest of our inheritance now, and, as we have seen, He will be the fulness of our inheritance hereafter. *Here*, the Author of our life, the seal of our adoption, our strength and consolation, our Guide and Sanctifier, One who has sweetly counselled us, and graciously sustained us, amidst all our sin and weakness and sorrow—what shall not be the delight of our fellowship with Him when there shall be nothing to quench and nothing to grieve that Holy Inhabitant, in our body or our spirit! And how should the anticipation of this perfect communion encourage us to seek *now* the full blessing of His precious indwelling, that we may obtain *here* that

power for victory which shall hereafter be our fitness for the enjoyment of an unbroken rest of holiness!

2. We may taste even "the powers of the world to come," and yet be destitute of saving grace.

How this enhances the value of spiritual religion—of the real conversion of the heart to God! We need not dwell on so common a topic; but it is too solemn to be passed over altogether. An angel's strength, and intelligence, and lustre, are no passport to a place in heaven. We might cast out devils in the name of Jesus, and yet know Him not. We might work miracles by the power of the Spirit, and yet die eternally destitute of His regeneration. Oh! amidst all the busy strife that is ever waging between the extremes of Pharisaism and Rationalism—of the mere form and the no form of godliness,—to lift the cry of arresting personal appeal, "He that hath the Son hath life;"—"If a man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His!" "Brethren, examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."

3. If we have saving grace, the consideration of such a subject as the present one should not be deemed superfluous; but, on the contrary, ought to be fully applied for strength and blessing.

Paul is a striking instance, within the reach of

our imitation, of the advantage to be derived *here* from "the powers of the world to come." He knew them, indeed, beyond what we can, in his miraculous sustainings and deliverances, of which we have a copious record. But in many cases he used them as we also may use them. Thus, in prospect of the dissolution of his earthly tabernacle, he looked forward to one "not made with hands." From his "light affliction," as faith enabled him to describe it, he looked up to the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." In the consciousness of the vileness of his body, he anticipated the energy of Jesus, which should fashion it like His own. To know Christ and the power of His resurrection, was his most earnest aspiration. His preaching and teaching was fulfilled, and his persecutions and trials endured, through the working which wrought in him mightily. He was "stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," because, through the certain hope of the resurrection life, he knew that his labour was not in vain in the Lord. He speaks of himself as always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his mortal flesh. And thus might "the powers of the world to come" also confirm and animate us in duty and suffering. But we are

too content with vague and indefinite views and expectations; and, from a notion of higher spirituality, decline looking into what, under our present circumstances, must be peculiarly adapted to strengthen us. And the devil encourages such a feeling, knowing that we lose hereby our comfort and our strength: and the world and the flesh, and our own corruptions, all tend to blight it: and thus our power here is little, and our expectation of it hereafter less. How, then, as the reverse of all this, should such a hope excite us to mortify our affections which are upon earth, and sustain us in bearing the burden of the flesh! Merely because our emancipation from its trammels is suspended, and our deliverance from its corruption deferred, shall we submit now to the tyranny of our lusts, and the oppression of our weakness? Shall we not rather use the certainty of our *future liberty*, and the sure promise of our *ultimate power*, as Paul uses the fact of our Lord's resurrection, which is the type and pledge of both: "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

4. And we are reminded here, that we must

not, while we anticipate our endowment of power hereafter, suppose that we are destitute at this present time of a sufficiency for present circumstances. The resurrection life of Christ is ours even now; and thereby we *do* overcome the world, and the devil, and sin; we *do* mortify the deeds of the body; we *do* set our affections on the things above; we *do* forsake the things temporal for the things eternal. Even the employment of the body and the use of the corporeal faculties is here often redeemed and elevated by the grace and knowledge of God, and thus the very senses in some measure quickened; and often the intellectual man itself becomes empowered for higher effort and more efficient exercise by the entrance of His word into the soul. And as regards the *spiritual* man, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ;" and the power of God to usward who believe is exceeding great, "according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead." "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," is a promise which has lost none of its truth or reality. And if our lot be "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword," "in all

these things we are," even here, "more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

5. But, again, what a full eternal satisfying is reserved for them that love God, of all those desires and capacities, which, high and holy and heavenly, as they are, have seemed, nevertheless, in this world to be stirred *hopelessly* within them.

How often has the soul longed to escape, as the dove from its cage, out of the strife by which it has been surrounded or pined, as the eagle chained to the rock, for the light and glory above it! But hereafter all the glimpses and prospects and efforts, from which we have so often sunk back disappointed, will be more than realized. We shall possess the fulness of power for fulness of love and service. Whatever the heart shall prompt of devotion or of duty, the tongue shall not fail to utter, nor the hand to execute. *Power*, in our present condition, seems the name of a new world, in which we are strangers; in eternity it will express the condition in which we shall be at home. The *kingdom* of our God and the *power* of His Christ will then be come, and they will be ours; while all we have will still be laid at the feet of Him we love; and *all* the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty be *His* for ever and ever.

6. And, finally, how shall the coming condition be distinguished by delight in all duty and satisfaction in all service! How shall the sorrow and the sadness which accompanies the conscious impotency of all effort here for Him for whom we would live and die, be exchanged for the conviction, without sense of merit or emotion of boasting, that we fulfil His will and attain His purpose! Then shall the spirit no more lament its drowsiness and weakness, or bewail its wandering affections or unsustained devotion. No longer, as it speeds its way on a Father's errand, will it distrust the strength of its wing, or the endurance of its flight. Consciousness of power, conspiring with perfectness of love, will infuse the richest enjoyment into the fulfilment of every command, and bless the most devoted obedience with the joy of a lawful and holy complacency. Though ever unprofitable servants, we shall rejoice that we do what it is our duty to do; though abased, even in our glory, no sense of imperfection shall ever render us uneasy. No infirmity shall be our burden, no incapacity our complaint, but *with* the Saviour, and *like* Him, our whole body, soul, and spirit shall be His in the joy and power and blessing of an endless life.

And this, then, is the end of my hope! Thou, my Lord and my God, shalt come again with

power and great glory;—Thou shalt take *me* to Thee Thy great *power* and reign:—and Th^u shalt change my vile body, that it may be like unto Thy glorious body, according to the working of Thy mighty *power*.—and I shall awake up *after Thy likeness!* It is enough, Lord! Be it so! I shall be *satisfied* with it!

LECTURE VIII.

THE NEW COVENANT WITH ISRAEL AND JUDAH THE FRUIT OF CHRIST'S MORE EXCELLENT MINISTRY.

BY THE REV. EDWARD BICKERSTETH,
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HILBREWS VIII. 6—9.

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much ^{he} is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt."

THE Apostle Paul in writing his Epistle to the Hebrews, contrasts the character of the old and the new covenant. He does this that he may show the superior excellence of the new covenant in its High Priest, its temple, its sacrifice, and its promises, and bring the Hebrews to the full enjoyment of Gospel blessings.

Hence it was not the apostle's design to dwell on the more peculiar features of the promise as first given, in respect of the Jewish nation, to whom it was originally addressed. He proves in another Epistle, that our Lord was not only a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises to the Jewish fathers, but ^{that} the Gentiles might glorify God for his ^{mercy}. He asserts, also, that if we are ^{Christians} we are Abraham's seed, and heirs of ^{the} promise made to the seed of Abraham; and thus shows that it has a real application to Gentile believers.

Yet he elsewhere says of the Israelites, "that the covenants were theirs as well as the giving of the law and the promises."

The object of this Lecture is to consider the proper fulfilment to the Jewish people of the new covenant made with Israel and Judah, as the fruit of Christ's more excellent ministry. On this view the apostle to the Hebrews does not

dwell, as not in his immediate design in writing to Jews. But his bringing the promise of the new covenant, given in Jeremiah, before the Hebrews particularly, and his very address to them as Hebrews, shows that it did also apply specially to them. He calls them to abandon the old covenant, as vanishing away, and to embrace the new, as peculiarly belonging to them.

It is needful that we Gentiles should bear in mind this special and original reference of the new covenant to the Jewish people, that we may be preserved from being high-minded, and wise in our own conceits.

The original covenant is recorded thus in the 31st chapter of Jeremiah :—

“ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will *er*y, *by* a new covenant with the house of ~~Israel~~ *er* and *with* the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was *an* husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they

shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. xxxi. 31—34.)

Let us consider—

I. The proofs of its direct reference to the Jewish nation.

II. The time of its fulfilment to them.

III. Its present anticipation to Gentile believers.

IV. The blessings that will attend the proper fulfilment.

I. THE PROOFS OF ITS DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE JEWISH NATION.

1. *It is addressed to the two houses of which that nation was composed.* The Jewish nation consisted of the house of Israel and the house of Judah, together comprising the twelve tribes of Israel. The Gospel Church is never called the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Ever after the time of Solomon, this was the national description of the whole of Israel. It is one plain mark that the twelve tribes, as distinct from the Gentile world, are specially designed. The prophet is so specific, that more general terms, like Zion, or the Israel of God, are avoided, and terms used that are never exclusively applied to

the Church of Christ at large, of Jews and Gentiles under the Gospel dispensation, nor to the Gentile nations.

By the striking figure of two sticks joined together into one stick, for the pointing out the full union and restoration of both Judah and Israel in the last days, Ezekiel sets before us, in the plainest terms, the gathering together of the whole Jewish nation from the Heathen; and it is added, "I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children's children for ever." The descriptions of converted and restored Israel are national and universal: "The righteous nation which keepeth truth;" "all thy people shall be righteous;" "the holy people;" "the city of righteousness;" "all thy children shall be taught of me, saith the Lord;" "all Israel shall be saved;"—thus the nation of the Jews is specially intended.

2. *The covenant is given to the children of those fathers who received the first covenant and broke it.* Thus Jeremiah declares, it is "not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them

out of Egypt." When the apostle is enumerating the special and peculiar privileges of the Jews, he states this as one of them: "Whose are the fathers." It is to the literal descendants of those who came out of Egypt, by Moses, that the prophet makes the promise. As the first covenant with them was national, so is the new covenant to be national. We have no right, under a fancied deeper spirituality, therefore, to rob the Jews of their birthright, and to say that the new covenant is not ratified with the nation as such.

3. *It is the same house of Israel and Judah who have been previously sorely afflicted.* They had greatly rebelled against God, and they were and are chastened with severe judgments for their iniquity. We read, just before the promise of this new covenant: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of men, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down, and to throw down and to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord." The identity is thus unequivocally established; the same Judah and Israel that had been the subjects of special and lengthened

judgments, are to be multiplied, and built up, and planted.

4. *This new covenant is joined also with a promise to Israel of national recovery in spite of their long iniquities.* God engages absolutely to make this covenant, and provides for everything which could forfeit it in the rebellion of the people, by the free forgiveness of all their sins: "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." And the words following this promise of this covenant in Jeremiah make the Divine purpose clear: "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon, and of the stars, for a light by night; which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done." Thus is the new covenant surrounded with Divine pledges, assuring it to the Jewish nation, notwithstanding all their past iniquities. Such is the sovereignty of Divine grace.

5. *This new covenant is yet farther directly*

assured to Israel, *by a closing promise of the final and permanent rebuilding of Jerusalem*: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel to the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes; all the fields unto the brook Kedron, unto the corner of the horse-gate towards the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever." The last part of this promise, that the city should never again be thrown down, distinctly shows that it cannot refer to the restoration from Babylon; as does the former part, which shows that its extent should far exceed anything that has yet been accomplished. After the return from Babylon, they were under the old covenant only, and continued so till the coming of Christ. The new covenant has yet, therefore, to be realized to them.

But, last of all, this new covenant is ratified by the blood of Jesus. His blood is the blood of the everlasting covenant. The apostle tells the Hebrews: "With his own blood he obtained eternal redemption." Hence, in appointing the Lord's Supper to commemorate his death for us, and to

assure the blessings of the new covenant to us, he tells us: "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins." He is the Mediator of the new covenant, ratifying that covenant with a sacrifice infinitely more precious and stupendous than all the sacrifices of the law of Moses. How infinitely secure in all its parts must this new covenant be for those expressly included in its provisions! The inspired evangelist declares that Caiaphas truly prophesied that Jesus died for the Jewish nation. They are, then, as well as the children of God that were scattered abroad, most explicitly included and intended in the new covenant ratified by the death of Jesus.

We are thus infallibly brought to the conclusion that the new covenant blessings are yet to be realized to the literal Israel, and that they, as a nation, have a peculiar and distinctive interest in it, and right to it.

II. THE TIME OF ITS FULFILMENT TO THEM.

The fulfilment of this promise has never yet been realized to the literal Israel; it is one of those unfulfilled promises for which the whole people of God are waiting.

We will first show,—

1. *The promise has not yet been fulfilled to the literal Israel.* Jerusalem is trodden down of the

Gentiles, and the Jews are still scattered over the earth. The wrath of God, as predicted, has long rested on them for their enormous sins: "Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they pleased not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved; to fill up their sins always, for the wrath is come on them to the uttermost." A fearful blindness, the fruit of their own sin, has been sent upon them, according as it is written, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day."

In consequence of this, they themselves have refused to lay hold by faith on the promises; they themselves have rejected the blessings which God has set before them in their own Scriptures; they themselves have clung to the *old* covenant of works as their ground of hope and life. The only means of gaining these *new* covenant blessings is, to believe God's testimony concerning his Son: "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law; for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone." They have spurned at and rejected the

great sacrifice of the new covenant, and the Great High Priest, after the order of Melchisedec, which God had provided for them. This they continue to do to this day. Judge Noah, in America, who is a Jew looking for their restoration, in his Address to the Jews, allows, indeed, our Lord Jesus Christ to be a celebrated Jewish Reformer, who well brought out and developed the moral principles of the Jewish Law; but he rejoices in the spread of Unitarianism, and gathers the hope from it that Christians will come over to the Jews, and not Jews to the Christians. He pleads earnestly for the rebuilding of a synagogue or temple at Jerusalem (for which they have, he says, recently obtained the Sultan's permission) on these principles.

Thus they have not yet received the rich blessings attendant upon a cordial reception of the new covenant.

2. *In the day of Israel's recovery this new covenant will be fulfilled to them.* The testimonies of the inspired prophets here are numerous and explicit.

Isaiah connects it with the return of the Redeemer to Zion. (Isa. lix. 20, 21.) "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith

the Lord: my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."


Jeremiah views it in immediate connexion with the reign of Christ over Israel, and their miraculous restoration: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth which brought up, and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land." (Jer. xxiii. 5—8.)

Ezekiel gives a similar testimony, connecting it with a large outpouring of the blessed Spirit: "When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of

many nations; then shall they know that I am the Lord their God which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord." (Ezck. xxxix. 28, 29.)

Zechariah connects it with the presence of the Messiah (ii. 10—12): "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again."

Zechariah has a similar promise (xiv. 8, 9): "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one."

The grand means by which the  shall be changed, and receive these new covenant blessings,

is, the gift of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him." Such are some of the explicit declarations of the Old Testament.

The New Testament is also express as to a future fulfilment of the promises of the blessings of the new covenant to Israel at the time of their restoration, and of the Lord's second advent.

Our Lord intimates this at the close of his last address to the Jewish people (Matt. xxiii. 38, 39): "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The apostle brings the same truth before the Romans, with special reference to this new covenant in Jeremiah: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from

Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." (Rom. xi. 25—27.)

I have simply given these quotations from Scripture, because their obvious meaning so plainly and unequivocally expresses the truth we are pressing upon you, that they need no laboured expositions. Let the simplicity and majesty of the word alone, let the bright and pure light of Scripture, in its plain literal meaning, meet all the laboured reasonings of learned expositors* who would only apply them to the return of Israel from Babylon, or turn them from the literal Israel to the Christian Church, exclusively of Israel. Let us have faith in God's plain word. Let us not doubt that the literal Israel is yet to

* I regret to include among these Professor Alexander's work on Isaiah, truly valuable as fully answering Neologian Infidelity, and ably defending its Divine inspiration. It is a work in which we have much learned and useful criticism, but it is meagre and sometimes very unsatisfactory in interpretation. The attempt to answer Dr. Henderson's application of the prophecies to the literal Israel appears to me an utter failure, as is that to make St. Paul in the Romans the advocate of this spiritualizing away of prophecy. See Birks's Sermon on the principles of prophetic interpretation, in the Lectures on "Israel Restored," and the author's introductory remarks to his work on "THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS," where this subject is fully considered.

be restored to their own land, and to receive as certainly and literally all the glorious promises of God's words, as they have certainly and literally received the threatenings and judgments predicted.

At the beginning of this prophecy of the new covenant, the Lord refers its fulfilment to the last days, saying, "In the latter days ye shall consider it. At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people." (Jer. xxx. 24; xxxi. 1.)

III. THE PRESENT ANTICIPATION OF THE NEW COVENANT TO GENTILE BELIEVERS.

It is important that we should not lose sight of this contrast truth. Those who would exclusively confine the glorious things promised to Israel to the Christian Church, derive all the strength of their views from a truth that is clearly revealed in both the Old and New Testament, that Christ should be rejected by the literal Israel, and for a season the kingdom of God should be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Let us, then, distinctly show, that we do fully hold this truth also, and that there has been in the Christian Church a present anticipation of the new covenant to us Gentile believers. This by no means extinguishes the literal fulfilment, but exists along with it.

1. *The nature of the new covenant is free and absolute promise.* God engages himself to work in his people that which he requires from them. It is in this an entire contrast to that first covenant, which was conditional on obedience, and which was broken. Oh, thanks be to God for this unspeakable blessing—a free, gratuitous salvation originating in divine love, well-ordered in all things and sure. Christ has fulfilled the law for us: “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” He has removed the curse, bearing it for us; He has fulfilled the condition of life that the free gift might come to us; He maintains also what He has begun. All glory be to the Lord Jesus Christ for the sure foundation thus laid for blessings to us Gentiles.

2. *The extent of God's free promises is limited only by the sovereignty of his grace.* Here there is no national distinction to bar the Gentile from the Gospel. “There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.” “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” There is no claim of merit in any human being in his sight.

God is absolutely sovereign in giving his mercy and grace. "I will have mercy," he says, "on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion; so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." This truth, so offensive to man's pride, calls forth our Lord's special thanksgiving: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Thus, again, the way is opened for spiritual blessings flowing to us Gentiles, having no fathers, according to the flesh, to plead before God for us.

3. *The purpose of God from the beginning, while the Jews rejected the Gospel, was freely to extend the promise to others.* St. James clearly announced this in the assembly at Jerusalem: "Simeon hath declared how God, at the first, did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who

doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." The apostle, in Romans ix., quotes several of the prophecies of the Old Testament to show this:—"He saith, in Hosea, I will call them my people which were not my people, and her beloved which was not beloved; and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God."

This purpose has been carrying out for 1800 years, and innumerable precious souls have thus attained admission into the "Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all."

4. *The blessings which the Gentile Churches now obtain are actually the very same which are promised to Israel hereafter.* These blessings are, in a large measure and degree, already obtained by true believers in our Lord Jesus Christ: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." How rich they are: how suited to the wants and desires of every converted soul! "I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to

the greatest; for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Here we have the new nature imparted, the heart-holiness and conformity to God's will, the fellowship with him as our God, the saving knowledge of the Lord, and the free and full pardon of all our sins. These are the very blessings which the Lord gives to his people, redeeming them from all iniquity, and purifying to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The reason of the whole, the very foundation-stone, is declared in this new covenant made with Israel to be the free forgiveness of all their sins. With this entire acquittal, this justification by grace, comes every other good. This is the very character of the Gospel, to be carried into all the world and preached to every creature.

Thus, in the blessed company of all faithful people believing in the Lord Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile, we have an anticipation of converted Israel: we have truly, at present, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, who already show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into his marvellous light;" who already, in some measure, realise the great spiritual blessings of the new covenant in themselves, and

anticipate and show forth beforehand first-fruits of its future glory. These blessings are realised to believing Gentiles, not nationally, but individually, and they will hereafter be granted to the Jewish nation, when they welcome Christ, as the first covenant was made with the nation. The foundation-stone will be the free forgiveness of their sins. Oh, how tremendous was the evil to the Jewish nation of unbelief in God's word! Oh, how fearful is the blindness and hardness of the human heart when left to itself—how dreadful our fallen state—how inveterate the self-righteousness and resting in outward forms of unconverted man, when this infinitely *more excellent ministry* was rejected by this highly-favoured nation! What a High Priest was provided for them! What a sacrifice! What miracles of mercy were wrought among them! What gifts of the Spirit were imparted! And yet, in love with sin, trusting in their Temple, self-righteously boasting in outward formality, they rejected all their true glory and blessedness. Well does Chrysostom say to Christians, "God permitted the single temple at Jerusalem to be destroyed, and erected in its stead a thousand others of far higher dignity than that; for the apostle declares, 'Ye are the temple of the living God.' Adorn this house of God, drive from it all wicked

thoughts, so that you may be a temple of the Spirit, and make others do so. It is not here as in the Old Testament; wherever you may be you still have the altar, the sacrificial knife, and the offering by you, for you yourself are priest, altar, and sacrifice. Wherever you are you may raise an altar, by cherishing a devout and serious temper. Place and time are no hinderance; though you bow not the knee, though you beat not the breast, though you stretch not your hands to heaven, but only manifest a warm heart to God, you have all that belongs to prayer. The wife, while she holds in her lap the spindle and spins, can with her soul look up to heaven and call on the name of the Lord. It is possible for this man to offer a fervent prayer while he is on his way alone to market; for that other to lift up his soul to God, who sits in his shop and sews leather; and the servant who makes purchases, goes errands, or sits in the kitchen, has nothing to hinder him from doing the same thing."

Thus does Chrysostom of old testify against outside religion and Popery, and the form of godliness without the power, and shows us the true anticipation of the new covenant already possessed by Gentile believers. May we, my brethren, be guarded against all Tractarian corruption of the simplicity of the Gospel, and be of

that true "circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

May we, my brethren, now, in these times of the Gentiles, which seem to be just closing, in this accepted time, in this day of salvation, embrace the mercy of the Gospel and be reconciled to God. We beseech you, receive not the grace of God in vain. Rise to your high standing and position as the heirs of these promises and the manifesters of this grace.

IV. THE BLESSINGS THAT WILL ATTEND THE PROPER FULFILMENT.

There are yet greater blessings in store for Israel, for the Church of Christ, and for the world, in the literal accomplishment of this covenant to the Jewish nation. These we can but partially discern or unfold; but it especially becomes us Gentiles not to be ignorant of this, lest we be high-minded. There is a full, peculiar, and more exact and minute accomplishment of this prophecy yet to take place, and this for the blessedness of the whole earth.

We may observe, first, *that it is only an elect number among the Gentiles that now receive the Gospel.* It is not the Gentile world at large, from the least to the greatest, though Christ died for all, and all are to be invited. It is not all in

the Gentile nations that have generally received the Gospel, nor all in churches where the Gospel is faithfully preached, even of those who profess to believe; countless multitudes have a name to live while they are dead, and profess Christ while they are workers of iniquity.

We may also farther observe, *that Gentile Christendom has been as largely apostate now as Israel was when she was rejected.* The Eastern Churches, the Roman Churches, the Protestant Churches, have all fearfully partaken of this apostasy from the truth as it is in Jesus. The warning, "Be not high-minded, but fear; if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee," belongs to us. We have stood by faith; but in the superstitions of the Greek Church, in the apostasy of Rome, and in the formality, Neology, and worldliness of the Protestants, it is too clear we have fallen from that standing, and have come to the predicted issue: "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all." Oh! how fallen is man! How verily, at his best estate, every man living is vanity! And oh! how wonderful and unspeakable is the goodness and loving-kindness of God, in that, where sin has so abounded, grace shall much more abound. His

own kingdom of grace and glory shall at length triumph over all obstruction.

When this purpose of love, this new covenant of mercy against all desert, and triumphing over all sin, is accomplished to Israel, there will be these blessed issues :—

1. *The glorious perfections of God will all be displayed and illustrated by the restoration and blessedness of Israel.* This was the conclusion to which St. Paul comes on surveying this result of God's dealings with Jews and Gentiles: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor, or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and to Him, and through Him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen." The lessons of God's providence in dealing with Israel are full of instruction for these days. Oh that our statesmen would read Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the other prophets, for the inspired science of political economy, and the divine methods of deliverance from the difficulties of these times, and guiding all things most effectually to secure national prosperity! We should

then be preserved from supporting superstition and idolatry at home and abroad, and shielded from those judgments which hang heavy all around us. The wonders of God's prescience in foreseeing and ordaining all things from the beginning; of his holiness, in his most marked abomination of sin by its lengthened punishment, even in the posterity of his most beloved servants; of his faithfulness in the fulfilment, on the one hand, of his threatenings against the rebellious, and, on the other, of his richest promises in the pardon and salvation of most guilty sinners. Oh! how fully will restored Israel illustrate these glories of our God! How infinite and unsearchable the riches of his wisdom by which all this shall be accomplished, and the depth of his long-suffering, and the perseverance of his love, and the extent of that abundant mercy towards a nation blaspheming and rejecting the only-begotten Son of the Most High!—a nation that has for 1800 years accounted the only-begotten Son, in the most stupendous love, a vile impostor, and at length conceived He was their own Messiah, their King, and their glory!—this nation shall finally be pardoned, accepted, and made a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of our God! How must this miracle of mercy call forth songs of

admiring gratitude, and the fullest hallelujahs of the whole Church of God through eternity!

The blessedness of Israel, how great it must be when the whole of these new covenant blessings are realised! It is but a foretaste and earnest that Gentile nations have had in the elect gathered out of them. But under the larger and fuller outpouring of the blessed Spirit, great as were their privileges and blessings under the first covenant, which they lost through refusing the Mediator of the better covenant, these privileges shall be far surpassed in the richer dispensation of grace yet to come. We shall witness the laws of God, fully put in the mind and written in the heart of the righteous nation. We shall see the universal national acknowledgment of God as their own God, and they as being his people, and this as the real glory of his people Israel; we shall see that which has never yet been realised under the Gentile dispensation, the knowledge of the Lord shall be universal, from the least to the greatest, and the whole nation will generally and universally experience the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven. The prophecies are full of glowing descriptions of this state: "The Lord God shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people shall be all righteous, the branch of

my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." These blessings, to be bestowed on Israel, will never again be forfeited or lost. "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." We cannot adequately conceive the outbursting of rapturous joy with which restored Israel will exclaim: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage! He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. * 'Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

Nor is this all. *The restoration of Israel is ever connected with the largest benefits to the whole Gentile world.* The original promise to Abraham has yet to receive a more abundant accomplishment: "Thou shalt be a blessing, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The promise in Isaiah has yet to be fully accomplished: "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The New Testament similar assurances of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, and of their being received again, becoming as life from the dead to the world, have to be yet fulfilled. This gives all


nations such a real and intense interest in the salvation of Israel. This accounts for the energy of interest which the apostle of the Gentiles shows on this subject: "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved." Nay, this explains why the Lord himself is represented as full of glowing zeal on this subject, and He is saying: "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The whole world is interested in the fulfilment of the better covenant to the Jewish nation, and shall thus alone attain its full blessedness.

Well, then, Christian brethren, may we have lectures to explain and unfold the Divine purposes in their salvation! Well may we, in the shaking of all nations, look forward to the restoration of that Jerusalem which is to be the joy of the whole earth! No fancied Republic or Chartist elysiums will restore peace and righteousness to the troubled nations. The reign of the Son of God over the house of Jacob is God's method of blessing the world. He alone is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, and the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." All others are false Christs. "Of the increase of his government and

peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever." you

In practically applying this subject,— ow

I call you to see *the unspeakable importance of faith in God's promises*. Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and was fully persuaded what God had promised he was able to perform, and so innumerable blessings came on him and his posterity and the world. His descendants hardened their hearts in unbelief, and lost all, and have been in misery and degradation for 1800 years. The elect among the Gentiles believed, and obtained the better promises of the new covenant and the Heavenly Jerusalem,— but Gentile Christendom has apostatized, and is sunk in Infidelity, Popery, and worldliness, and is preparing for the last judgments; nor is there any remedy for any one amongst us but in personal repentance for our sins, nor any receiving of the blessings of the new covenant but in personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I call you this evening also, to *realising faith* in the Lord's full purposes of love to Israel; to be assured that this people, now so scattered and  over the earth, after so many centuries of

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and opprobrium, will assuredly be restored their own land, and be there blessed with unequalled national dignity and glory and unparalleled national spiritual blessings, and so be made a larger blessing to all nations than they have ever yet been. Exercise faith on these great promises of his word, help every effort for the salvation of Israel, and joyfully anticipate this divinely-appointed method of healing all the miseries of an apostate Church and a guilty world. It is the beginning of the creation of the new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, for then Jerusalem is created "a rejoicing, and her people a joy." View this as life from the dead to the world, then will you fully sympathize with David, who, seeing and confessing the universal sinfulness of man, exclaims, with such earnestness: "Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

But, my brethren, yet more earnestly I call you individually to *come to Christ Jesus personally, day by day*, that now, in your own soul, you may receive for yourselves all the spiritual blessings of the new covenant. They are all open to you. They are all ready for you. In this accepted time, in this day of salvation, oh! secure these

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covenant blessings, ratified by the blood of Jesus, the laws of God put into your mind and written on your hearts; God, to you a God, and you among his people, and taught by himself to know him; and free forgiving mercy for all your unrighteousness, and your sins and your iniquities remembered no more. Be you among the Gentiles who shall glorify God for this mercy. Be you among the Gentiles who shall rejoice with his people. Oh! that you too may join in the last triumphant hallelujahs: "Praise the Lord all ye Gentiles, and laud him all ye people!"

For this end turn from every evil way. Abhor that which is evil. Cleave to that which is good, and place your whole trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Walk closely with him. Oh! my brethren, I beseech you, commend to Jew and Gentile through the world the blessings of the new covenant by your whole conduct and conversation, being manifestly declared to be the epistles of Christ, "written with the Spirit of the living God, in fleshly tables of the heart."

LECTURE IX.

CHRIST'S PAST OFFERING AND FUTURE
APPEARING IN CONNEXION WITH
MAN'S DEATH AND JUDGMENT.

BY THE REV. B. PHILPOT, M.A.,
RECTOR OF GREAT CRESSINGHAM

HEBREWS IX. 27, 28.

“As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.”

THE Holy Ghost is here placing before the Hebrew Christians an expansive survey of Gospel mercies, as developed in the priesthood of Christ; and graciously opens up the spiritual signification of those “carnal ordinances” which constituted the Levitical worship. All the

services, and even the furniture, of that "worldly sanctuary," were prophetic of redemption, and to every faithful worshipper prefigured Christ.

It were beside our purpose to take a general view of this instructive portion of the subject; but some particulars it is needful to notice, as an illustration of our text. May God the Father, who alone openeth the heart to understand the Scriptures, and God the Son, who is the High Priest of good things to come, and God the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to show us things to come—three Persons and one God, bless and multiply the Word to our souls!

We read in the books of Moses, that the first of the two compartments into which the Tabernacle was divided was the sanctuary, or holy place: it stood between the outer and the inmost court, a type of the Church militant on earth, separated, on one side from the world without, and on the other from that glorious land, whither she is fighting her way; and where she is destined, when the fight is done, to sit in triumph beside her ascended Lord. A thick and massive veil divided the sanctuary from the Holy of Holies. The daily ministrations in the former indicated the unceasing intercourse with Christ needed by every faithful soul, as well as the constant

supplies of light, and grace, and strength, which we require in our journey to the heavenly Canaan: while the yearly service of the latter was altogether one of sacrificial atonement for sin. On the occasion of this annual fast, the high priest, having finished the various offerings, and sent away into the wilderness the scape-goat, which typically bore upon him all the confessed sins of the worshippers, entered into the Holiest of all, and sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice "upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat," reconciling the Holy place, himself, and the people. This was done in his common dress; and he then put on his sacerdotal robes, and came forth to declare to them that looked for his return the acceptance of their offering and the forgiveness of their sins. One circumstance more we may profitably notice: the high priest, in acknowledgment of the imperfect character of that atonement, on appearing the second time to bless the people, made a fresh sin-offering for himself and them.

When "Christ our Passover was slain for us," those shadows of the law deepened into the living realities of the Gospel. The scape-goat then bore away into a land of forgetfulness the mighty burthen of all faithfully-confessed sin: the living bird, marked with the blood of his

slain mate, then flew away with it into the open field. And "*when He shall appear the second time,*" to confer the full blessing on his waiting people, the substance shall be perfected in glory. He has meanwhile entered, as our forerunner, into heaven itself with his own blood, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, there to plead the merits of his sacrifice, not for himself as the Jewish high priest needed, but for his people.

And such an excessive value did this offering derive from the dignity of his Person, that, as the apostle argues in the preceding verse, its healing efficacy reaches from Adam downwards, through every generation, to the last-born member of his mystical body: "The Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world." Had not the merit of that oblation been infinite, Jesus "must needs have often suffered since." But as man, by the nature of his sin and its penalty, can die but once, so the offering of Him, who took part of the same nature as our substitute, could not be repeated. The pretended repetition of it in the sacrifice of the mass is clearly opposed to these Scriptures. Our High Priest needed not, as those high priests, daily to offer up sacrifice for sin, or a remembrance again made of it every year. His one offering of Himself hath met all

the demands against us, and "perfected for ever them that are sanctified." As "the Lord from heaven,"—"the man who was God's fellow," his vicarious offering put more honour on the law and brought more glory to God, than if the whole family of man had suffered the eternal penalty of its breach in hell. Therein the Church hath "received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins;" and the Father hath publicly proclaimed his acceptance of the redemption price, by "bringing again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep." The sting was drawn, and death "had no more dominion over Him."

Such is the Levitical prophecy of salvation to which our text points: and it marks one important distinction between the type and the antitype. When Jesus shall return from the heaven of heavens, to bless all "*who look for Him*," it will be "*without sin,*"^{*} or a sin-offering: * the atonement was finished on Calvary; and He will gather together in one his elect from the quick and dead, complete "the adoption (to wit, the redemption of the body),"—call his saints to be his assessors during the millennial judgment-day, and to "reign with Him on the earth." "*Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.*"

* See this meaning of *amapria* in 2 Cor. v. 21.

We have here then presented to us a contrast, yet a similitude, between God's appointment concerning man, and his appointment concerning Christ; between the condition of the suffering and dying believer, in this dispensation, issuing in his glorification on the judgment-day, or morning of the resurrection; and the Man of Sorrows bearing away the guilt of the sins of many; to be followed by his glorious personal manifestation, when He shall come again from the heaven of heavens as the Priest-King after the order of Melchisedec, to bless his expecting and prepared people. The brief but expressive character of those in whom this salvation will be perfected is that they are "*looking for Him.*"

For our unspeakable comfort the two-fold disaster stands thus confronted by a parallel two-fold mercy. Man's death and * condemnation, which is the fruit of sin upon the body is met by Christ's substitutionary sacrifice and eternal redemption. Christ's death corresponds to man's death,—He being offered "once for all;" and his once dying being sufficient *to bear the sins of*

* The omission of the article warrants this translation of *κρισις*. There will indeed be a judgment on all,—a righteous apportioning of reward according to works to believers; yet here, the word seems to mean the same as chap. x. 27.

many, and thus to put away the cause of death, namely, sin; and his second coming, *without sin, unto salvation*, corresponds to the judgment; for, instead of that eternal condemnation, Christ appears as the *risen* one, and the *justified* one, to raise his people from death: to manifest their justification before the world from all sin, and to give them, instead of the punishment due to sin, the full *salvation* of the resurrection life.

Thus understood, our text is a summary of all the previous lessons and arguments drawn from the priestly office of Christ; the doctrines thence unfolded are so precious, that, ere I enter on the strictly prophetic portion of it, I would briefly recapitulate these twofold series of solemn events:—

1. Man's death—the original penalty of sin.
2. Christ's death—the atonement for the sins of many.
1. After death—the judgment and eternal condemnation for unbelievers.
2. The second advent—and eternal redemption for believers.

The first two of each series belong to the same class. Man in his natural state looks for death, and after death he must expect condemnation. Man in his converted state looks back to Christ's

death, and forward to his "*appearing the second time unto salvation.*" The "fearful looking for of judgment" by unbelievers, is contrasted with the joyful looking for of salvation on the part of believers.

Here is the rejoicing of our hope. Conscience says, "You have sinned, and you must die." Faith answers, "*Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and of me.*" Conscience exclaims, "After death the judgment and fiery indignation on every soul of man that doeth evil." Faith replies, "*To them that look for Him, He shall appear the second time unto salvation.*" Thus Christ's death is the antidote to man's fear of death; and Christ's second coming is to the believer the antidote to the fear of judgment. If we have true faith in the efficacy of his one offering at his first coming, we shall have boldness to look forward with hope to his coming the second time, as a "blessed hope" and a glorious appearing to us. Truly, hope is a prophetic grace; and as faith gets more genuine and distinct, hope will grow more active and sustaining. When faith's backward gaze on the bright obscure of Calvary is clear and strong, then hope's prospective glance penetrates into heaven itself with animating anticipations of the day when He shall "rend the heavens and come down."

If, in this lengthened exposition of the text, I

have kept you too long from the prophetic portion of our subject, I trust a motive for patience has been found in the surpassing importance of the doctrines involved.

The remaining divisions of the text belong entirely to the future. "*Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*"

Here are two points for consideration:—

1. Christ's appearing again to bless his people.

2. The people who are the heirs of this blessedness.

1. *Christ's appearance the second time.* He who came once in the sinless infirmities of the first Adam, intreating sinners to be reconciled unto God, has passed his word that He will "come again," and "every eye shall see Him," "glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength." That appearance will be to "take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," but unto the complete *salvation of them that look for Him*. The two advents are eternally and gloriously connected. We may not separate the "child born" to the house of David, from the Almighty Prince on David's throne.

When Christ appeared the first time, *that* appearance was preceded by a *revelation*, or lift-

ing up the veil from hitherto obscure prophecies ; and followed at the appointed time by a real *presence*. And this arrangement has been traced in other great prophetic epochs of the world. At the "evening tide" of each waning dispensation, light was given to the faithful who were looking for it, by an uncovering of the sure word of prophecy, hidden till its consolations were needed. The question of John's disciples, "Art thou ~~He~~ that should come?" implied expectation. Anna, the aged prophetess, waited night and day in the temple, and spake openly of Jesus "to all them that looked for redemption." And the devout Simeon, too, instructed by the Spirit, was "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and when the infant Saviour was presented to him, he held him up in his arms, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The understanding of those signs was the badge of the faithful: the not discerning of them was our Lord's reproach to the unwatchful.

So when *He shall appear the second time*, they that *look for Him* will be prepared for His coming, not by any new revelation, but through the wisdom given them of God to unfold the prophetic Scriptures. At "the time of the end" the *vision shall speak*, and "the wise shall under-

stand" its speech. So arousing, indeed, will be the premonitory judgments of that day, that many who reject the lessons will be startled by the warnings. "Over all nations," in a measure, "the veil shall be destroyed." Yea, brethren, even now, while we are warning our generation, the forecast shadows of on-coming wonders are assuming an outline so distinctly marked, that every leading journal of Europe, and many of its most eminent statesmen* and scholars, have spoken with seriousness of "an approaching crisis." This is our *revelation*. It began to speak with plainness at the great political earthquake of 1793.† The *appearance* will open with the "sign of the Son of man;" first in the

* Mons. Guizot, when Minister of France, and the late Lord Melbourne, each from his place in the Senate, in speaking of the wild spirit of disorder which even then was infecting the minds of men so deeply and widely, anticipated with confessed alarm some terrific change. Lord Melbourne, advertg to the openly-declared intentions of bloodshed and violence, concludes with these words: "I know not whether this is more or less dangerous;— if more so, then we must suppose that the country is now so infected to the core that it is impossible we can hope for salvation from any course of measures that man can adopt."

† In one of Lamartine's speeches, as head of the Provisional Government, he proclaims the revolution of 1848 to be the last act of that great drama.

spiritual heavens, and then in the glory-cloud: the latter announced by the seventh trumpet, and followed, first by the resurrection of the sainted dead, and then by the rapture of the faithful living. After the judgment of these, and their measure of reward apportioned "according to the things done in the body," the personal *presence* of the Lord will take place, coming with all his saints. Having gathered "the first-fruits," He comes to reap the "harvest of the earth," and after that the "vintage." The *harvest* of such outer-court worshippers as, having built upon the foundation of Christ the "hay, wood, and stubble" of worldly compromises, unprofitable forms, or flinchings from the Christian conflict, had been left to be trodden down by the Gentiles in the great tribulation. In that furnace their work will be manifested as unsound, and burned; and loss shall they suffer in the kingdom; "but they themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire." It may be, too, that some of the other inhabitants of the earth, learning righteousness amid those judgments, shall be spared. Then comes the *vintage*, when "the angel shall thrust in his sharp sickle, and gather the vine of the earth, and cast it into the winepress of the wrath of God."

But let us consider, in their order, four particulars in reference to this second appearing:—

1. The predicted signs that may be expected to mark the *season* of it; for the parable of the fig-tree teaches that we ought to discern the period, if not the exact time, of the Lord's coming in his kingdom.

In the Christian Church we may expect a great falling away, so that Antichrist shall mightily prevail, false teachers abound, and forms, without the power, of godliness. The Gentile graft, in its turn, failing, as did the natural branches, a new dispensation will become plainly necessary.

In the Jewish Church, an altered aspect as to the world: their tribulation drawing to a close, and a standard lifted up for them among the nations. Further, we may look for the reunion of the twelve tribes, and their restoration to Judea in an unconverted state.

In the true Church, the love of some will wax cold because of abounding iniquity, and the faithful shall be minished from among the children of men; yet the Gospel message will be sent "as a witness" to all people and tongues; the little flock of Christ will be hunted and dispersed, but gifted with a strength of faith equal to the deepening persecutions of their day. There will

be light in their dwellings, though the darkness grows thicker around them.

In the world at large, we may expect a great minding of earthly things, as in the days of Noah and the days of Lot: a rapid development of the "mystery of lawlessness:" an unrighteous independence of rule, as in Eden, and the Old World, and Sodom. Man will be exalted, and God dethroned. The three unclean spirits, Popery, Infidelity, and Disorder, in monstrous alliance, will sweep across the nations of the earth, darkening all rightful authority, veiling the light of the Church, driving faithful ministers from their posts, and producing general popular commotions and "distress of nations, with perplexity." Of one nation in particular, Turkey, it is foretold, that it shall be dried up, or merged in some more powerful empire; and at the same time, great northern powers in arms will hover like a tempest-cloud over the lands where spoil is to be gotten.* Then shall also be "famines, pesti-

* "The name only of conquest is wanting to finish the work of annexation, to extinguish the last vestiges of Turkish power north of the Danube, and permanently to array upon the banks of that stream the threatening armies of the north, which have seemed for ages to be on their march to Constantinople."—*Times Newspaper*, March 12, 1849.

lences, and earthquakes," "wars, and rumours of wars." *

In the world of science, it will be a day of great invention, especially in the means of "running to and fro." But the ingenuity of man will be taxed chiefly to dishonour God; nations, principalities, and powers, will be combined in harmony of evil; and principles of the subtillest and deadliest character will be exercised to give the great apostasy a deeper dye of iniquity. "Then cometh the end."

2. *The time of the second appearing of Christ.*

"In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Many signs will indicate its approach. We have named some of them, and when they "*begin to come to pass*," the believer may lift up his head with joy, for the same generation which sees the beginning will witness the end. (Matt. xxiv. 34.)

Some brethren can find in the apocalyptic vision a revelation of the times and seasons which our Lord told his disciples it was not for them to know. I am yet inclined to think that the date of the second appearing is left—in mercy left—uncertain: for who that knows anything of its

* "All Europe is filled with wars, and rumours of wars."
—*Times*, March 17, 1849.

desperate proneness to delay would trust his deceitful heart with an *interval* ere his Lord come?

That the coming will be personal—the very “same Jesus who was taken up into heaven,”—few now deny. But many yet refuse to it a premillennial date. This fact has been so ably argued by other brethren,* that I will only here advert to one portion of Scripture, which has not yet, as I think, been fully brought to bear on the question. Zech. xiv. is a direct prophecy of facts, showing that the second coming of Christ will be literal, personal, and premillennial,—a coming to “reign on the earth,”—a coming distinct from any providential judgment or any spiritual spread of the Gospel.

The first three verses declare the Lord's coming at a time when the city of Jerusalem, inhabited by the restored Jews, before their national conversion, shall be besieged and taken by hostile nations. In their extremity of despair, “the Redeemer shall come to Zion,” and “all his saints with Him,” to deliver his people from their foes and turn them to Himself. The fourth

* See also some striking proofs of the premillennial advent in these most interesting works of the two Mr. Bonars, “Prophetical Landmarks,” and “Redemption Drawing Nigh.”

verse leaves us in no doubt as to the nature of that coming: it describes with great minuteness the spot whereon He shall alight upon the earth, even the mountain whence he personally ascended: thus strikingly fulfilling Acts i. 11.* If we are forbidden to doubt that it is the literal Jerusalem that shall be besieged, we are at least as much constrained to believe that it will be the literal Mount of Olives, "on the east of the city" on which the Redeemer shall descend, and that it is his own feet that shall stand upon it. The forms of expression preclude a spiritual interpretation. A king may, indeed, be said to come to a country when he sends his representative there; but if it were said that a king landed on the southern coast of England, and that his feet stood on British ground, none can reasonably doubt the fact of that king's personal presence amongst us. But if it still be urged, that all this, though admitted to be literal, may yet refer to scenes of rebellion at the close of a spiritual millennium, such a notion is plainly refuted by the following verses. The prophet goes on to announce,—not the general judgment, not "the new heavens and the new earth,"—but a period of holiness and happiness and peace over all the earth, with Jesus as its King. Frequent mention is made in other scriptures of his pre-

sence "in the midst of his people" in Israel, crowning their millennial blessings; and here the other inhabitants left on the earth are commanded to come up from time to time to the great metropolis of the millennial world, to have audience of Him, and to worship after an appointed manner. Whoever attempts to expound such passages figuratively, of the conquering influences of the Holy Spirit, exercises a latitude of spiritualizing which affords perilous ground for the Infidel to turn such licentiousness of interpretation against the Bible itself.

3. *The mode of this second appearing: "without sin."*

I called your attention before to this distinction between the type and the antitype. When our High Priest shall appear again no sin-offering will be required, Jesus having made it once for all. "The Son of God was manifested to take away our sins:" all sin which faith lays on Him is blotted out as a thick cloud for ever. If an objection arise here, that, in the glorious temple to be rebuilt at Jerusalem by the restored tribes, sacrifices and offerings will again be made during the millennium, we answer, that the intention of such sacrifices will differ, as do the sacrifices themselves in Ezekiel's vision, from those under the Levitical law. The ancient sacrifices were

offered prospectively as an atonement for sin: the millennial sacrifices can only be offered retrospectively, and as an acknowledgment of sin. The sin-offering of the Jew was, through a promised Saviour, to obtain forgiveness: but since the crucified Redeemer hath carried his own atoning blood into heaven, and thereby "obtained eternal redemption for us," no other sin-offering doth God require at our hands. Yet, as, in our wilderness commemoration of his first-advent mercies, we meet at his table to break the bread and drink the wine, so, in our millennial worship, there may be appointed for us some such visible ordinances, to keep freshly before our mind the boundless debt of gratitude that we owe to Jesus, and to give our songs of praise some deeper notes of joy.

4. *Christ shall appear the second time unto salvation to them that look for Him.* To all believers, dead and living, a completed adoption. The saints that "dwell in the dust," whom Jesus calls his "dead body," will constitute the main host of the redeemed. They, with their glorified bodies (for without the body the happiness and usefulness of the spirit would of necessity be incomplete) shall first have the honour of standing before the King; but "such honour, too, have all his saints;" we, which remain, shall not

long be left behind; and, on reaching the glory-cloud, will have the comfort of finding all departed friends, whom we loved in the Lord, there, ready to welcome us. Who can contemplate without a thrill of joy the sudden meeting in glory of all God's dear family! Moses, and Abraham, and David, the loving John, the resolute Peter, the unwearied Paul, the weeping Mary, and Mary the mother of Jesus; some loved parent, it may be, or some dear children of our own, whom we found it so hard to part with even for so brief a season,—all will be there to meet us, and to part no more for ever! Chiefest of all, Immanuel himself will be there; our eyes shall behold him and not another; our hands shall handle Him, our heads shall rest on His bosom; and there shall be “heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

Nor to man alone, but to all this “groaning creation,” there cometh a glorious deliverance. The apostle, using the same word in Heb. ii. 3, connects this salvation with Christ's complete victory over the Prince of this world, and the entire “subjection of the world to come,” including the “beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,” beneath his righteous

and peaceful dominion. (Compare Heb. ii. 8—8, with Psal. viii.)

How long the saints will remain in the cloud with Christ, ere they return as his assessors on the throne of judgment;—what awakenings, or what combinations of evil, will take place before their descent to the earth, is not revealed. Mockers, though awe-struck for a time, will, for the most part, like Pharaoh, harden their hearts in more desperate rebellion. To them the dispensation of forbearance will be closed, and all those “kindreds of the earth shall wail” because of the coming Judge. That progress will characterize the successive events which will complete the overthrow of Satan’s kingdom, we may infer from the closing and opening scenes of all former dispensations. There was an overlapping of each other which occupied a season in accomplishing the transition. But whatever the period may be, it will terminate in the perfect “restitution of all things.” “Christ must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet,”—till this platform, whereon He was despised and rejected, shall resound with the glad hosannas of every tongue, proclaiming Him “Lord of all!”

Lastly, we consider,—*Who are the heirs of this blessedness?* To whom will Christ appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation? “The Holy

Ghost proclaims, that it is to the souls that *look for Him*, that “earnestly expect Him” (Rom. viii. 19):—that “love His appearing” (2 Tim. iv. 8), and are “hasting unto the coming of the day of God” (2 Pet. iii. 12). The apostle describes the one great distinction in the character and condition of all men when he says, “We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen” (2 Cor. iv. 18). Unconverted men are walking “by sight.” They are glad that Christ is away, and cordially wish that He may never return. But the believer knows Him whom God hath sent; for he “has the same mind that was in Christ;” loves to hear his voice and follow him; his true “life is hid with Christ in God,” and “his affections are set on things above.” Therefore the sustaining consolation of his heart is the assurance, that “when Christ, who is his life, shall appear, he shall also appear with Him in glory.”

Dear brethren, let us all faithfully apply to ourselves this searching test of a safe standing for eternity. Am I looking for the coming of the Lord? Is the inclination of my mind to welcome Jesus? Amid the conflicts of the wilderness am I wearing “for an helmet the hope of salvation?” and having that hope, am I “purifying myself even as He is pure?” If these questions can be

met with confidence, then is there animating proof, that our hope of seeing the coming Saviour as He is, and reigning with Him on earth, is a sure and "blessed hope;" and "the day of the Lord will not overtake us as a thief in the night;" yea, rather, it will accomplish our "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in his eternal and everlasting glory." Every such believer has evidence of his pardoned and justified state; and to him, amid much remaining darkness and some unevenness of walk, the Son of Man *will appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

A few more plain words, and I have done.

1. "*It is appointed unto men once to die.*" Only once. If well done, what an infinity of glory beyond it! If wrongly done, "what a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation!" and no more returning to act a wiser part. A mistake here is without remedy or palliation for ever!

2. In the twofold office of High Priest Jesus hath not only atoned for our sins on the altar of his cross, but "ever liveth to make intercession for us." Whoever here has repented and put his soul into the hands of Jesus, has all his sins made an end of for ever. Though sought for, they shall not be found; for the High Priest is appear-

ing for him, and shewing cause why he should be kept, through faith, unto everlasting life.

3. What a motive is here supplied to the believer for an active, humble, and holy walk with God! "Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." If the Holy Spirit hath given us any foretaste of the happiness of this eternal association with God and the Lamb, our life in the flesh will betray the sweet savour of that glorious futurity. "A garden enclosed," is the beloved of the Lord and it will yield both fruit and flowers. And if by His permission the north wind blow over it, it will only shed forth a richer fragrance of the comeliness which He hath put on it. Oh, let this happy thought lead us in an honest and anxious spirit of inquiry into our hearts, to see whether Jesus or the world be dwelling there! It will be a withering blast to the "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," when the seventh trumpet suddenly shall announce that the patience of the Redeemer is at an end, and the day of vengeance come! Even now there is a sound of his chariot wheels upon the mountains. He is on his way back to rescue his weary bride from the conflict. But what language can describe the forlorn condition of them who, with all this costly outlay for their deliverance, are yet neg-

lecting so great salvation! What a bitter drop in their cup of woe will be the unavailing remembrance of free grace rejected,—offers of peace with God refused,—heavenly light shut out from their souls,—knocks of mercy at the heart unheeded,—truth seen too late, and seen in all the aggravated horrors of a sensibility tremendously quickened! O linger no longer in the city of destruction! Arise, escape for thy life! for “in such an hour as thou thinkest not, the Son of Man cometh!”

“May the Lord the Holy Spirit direct all our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ!”

LECTURE X.

THE CITY WHICH HATH FOUNDATIONS
PREPARED FOR THE FAITHFUL AND
SUFFERING PILGRIM.

BY THE REV. MOURANT BROCK, M.A.,
CHAPLAIN TO THE JATH PENITENTIARY

HEBREWS XI. 10.

*“He looked for a City which hath foundations,
whose Builder and Maker is God.”*

HEBREWS XIII. 14.

*“Here we have no continuing City, but we seek
One to come.”*

CHRISTIANS are “saved by hope;” and because saved by hope, “we rejoice in hope.” The object of this hope is “the glory of God,” even that glory which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, but

“which God hath revealed unto us by His Spirit.”

“He,” the Spirit, our Lord declared to his Apostles, “shall show you things to come.” Accordingly, the Spirit did reveal things future to the Apostles. They recorded them in the Scriptures; and, thus recorded, they form the subjects of our hope, we also having the promise of the same “Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of our understandings being enlightened to know *what is the hope* of His calling.”

Trusting to the promised aid of this great Interpreter, as well as Author, of the written Word, let us now reverently approach the consideration of “things hoped for,” as included under the term, “a City which hath foundations,”—or, more literally, “THE CITY, which hath foundations,”—in other words, *The firmly-founded City, the Maker and Builder of which is God.*

To this City, firmly founded (how different to the movable tents in which they dwelt!), Abraham, and the old Fathers, were looking. A City, moreover, not earthly, but heavenly. For “they,” as our Church well declares, “are not to be heard, who feign that the Fathers did look only for transitory promises.” No; this is shewn by the subsequent words of the Apostle: “These

all died in faith, not having received the promises and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," desiring "a better country, that is, an heavenly."

Like them, we also, strangers and pilgrims, seek now the same country, the same City. As to our great prototype, so also to each of us it hath been said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." That startling word hath been applied to our souls, "Arise ye, and depart, for this is not your rest." With dismay we have heard the terrible denunciation, "The earth, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." We have heard,—we have believed,—we have obeyed. With fixed purpose we have determinately left this Sodom of ours, soon to be engulfed in flame. Towards the heavenly mansions, with eyes uplifted and with hands outspread, we have bent our steadfast steps,—“For, here, we have no continuing city. But we seek One to come.”

Strangers and Pilgrims be now by the Divine Grace enlightened, comforted, and refreshed while we endeavour to discourse of THE CITY the bourn and object of our toilsome journey.

Vast and majestic is the theme, reaching, as it

does, into the distant future—surrounded by a halo of celestial glory—announced by the repeated Alleluias of heavenly hosts unnumbered—and dignified by the presence of the Eternal! Who is sufficient for these things! This only confidence have we; they are revealed, and revealed for our consideration. Yes; “The things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children.” Belonging to us, it is, therefore, our duty to consider and appropriate them; else we are found despisers of God’s promises.

Let us, then, with confidence that the way opened to us, and with reverence in regard to the bourn to which it leads, proceed to consider,*

I. THE CITY to which our attention is here called.

1. Frequent is the notice of, or allusion to this City in the apostolic letters.

Four times it is mentioned in the Epistles.

* The writer feels it just to state, that the subjects of these Lectures are not selected by the preachers. In regard to whatever is advanced on the present head, he begs the indulgence of his Readers. What he here writes, he offers with that diffidence which becomes *an inquiry into the future*, praying God, and calling on the Reader that God would be pleased to raise up men more enlightened by the Spirit, to interpret to his Church concerning the future which in His word He hath

the Hebrews; twice in the passages selected as the subject of discourse; and twice elsewhere. Thus, in verse 16 of chapter xi., "He hath prepared for them a City." And in xii. 22, "Ye are come unto the Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God."

Writing to the Ephesians Paul, also, says, "Ye are fellow-citizens with the Saints." And to the Philippians, "Our conversation,"—or rather, our citizenship, "is in heaven." And to the Galatians, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

In the Book of Revelation the mention of the City is frequent. "I will write upon him the name of the City of my God, New Jerusalem." And, "I saw the holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God." And, "That great City, the holy Jerusalem."

3. If it be asked, Is there, then, identity between the City thus mentioned and that to which Abraham had respect? we reply, Undoubtedly there is. For this, like the object of the Patriarch's hope, is pre-eminently "The City." Like his, it "hath foundations"—"twelve foundations;" both are "heavenly;" both are the residence "of just men made perfect;" of both "the Builder and Maker is God." We therefore conclude, that "The City firmly

founded," the object of Abraham's hope, is the same with the supernal Jerusalem of the Epistles, and with the City of "twelve foundations," as seen, by the beloved John, "descending from God out of Heaven."

4. But, besides this City, there is another of much note in Scripture, with which we must be careful not to confound the one now under consideration. This city, also, is called Jerusalem, though to it the term "new" is not, I believe, applied; and this city is also future. Of it Paul writes, in chap. xi. of his Epistle to the Romanay "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and of this, especially, Ezekiel and Isaiah large* discourse. So glowing is the language of latter, that, at first sight, one would suppose t l the city he describes is the same with " City." Very gloriously does he describe ition read at the close of the fifty-ninth, throughl sixtieth, and subsequent chapters of his propbiatl The quotation of Paul, however, just allude, subject which is from this prophecy, confines it t In re earthly state, as also does a close investigation of the text of the prophecy itself. This city, w fore, together with that mentioned in less, ma ing terms by Jeremiah, Zechariah, and ad Prophets, is not to be identified with "The city of foundations," heavenly, and descending from

God, but is an *earthly city*, built by man, the abode of the natural Israel, when restored by the favour of God to their own land.

5. In this city of Paul and of the Prophets we have, as it appears to me, described that abode called in Rev. xx., "The beloved city" associated with "The camp of the Saints," against which, at the close of the thousand years, Gog and his hosts go up, and are presently consumed in a fiery deluge. I take, therefore, this city, thus celebrated by Paul, the Prophets, and John, to be the capital and abode of the nation of Israel during the millennium, whence to the Gentiles will go forth through that period the rod of Christ's power.

6. Thus clearing the way by removing what we may call *The City of the Prophets*, we now come to speak of that which we may call *The City of the Patriarchs*, "The City which hath foundations."

And here, as a matter of course, we speak thereof from that Scripture where the City is most fully described, namely, in the last chapters of the Apocalypse of St. John.

From the latter part of Rev. xvii. to the end of the book (I speak with submission) we have, as it appears to me, a consecutive course of events foretold, extending from a time near the present,

through the millenary reign of Christ, through the judgment subsequent, even into the final and settled state of the Church, and of the World.

At the close of this chap. (xvii.) we have a judgment on the Whore,—Babylon, or Rome, executed by the ten horns of the Beast, which “are ten kings,” and in chap. xviii. her sudden, and *final*, destruction “in one day,” “in one hour,” by fire. On this event ascends from three heavenly companies a universal Alleluia four times repeated, expressive of assent and consent with the judgments of the Almighty.—“And his smoke rose up for ever and ever.”*

And, now, the Lord being about to do judgment on those who commenced the execution of His judgments on the Whore, He associates with Himself his Saints, here first introduced in this chronological prophecy as HIS WIFE, the same company which afterwards (chap. xxi.) is seen as “The Bride, the Lamb’s wife, the New Jerusalem descending out of Heaven.” Here the Wife is first introduced, and here also first mentioned as clothed in a bridal dress of “fine white linen,” or *bysus*.

Her second appearance is immediately after described as following her Lord “on white

* See Appendix A.

horses," to execute judgment on His and her foes. And her identity is, I apprehend, marked by the fact of her being represented as clothed in the same white *byssus*. (Ver. 14.)

Judgment being now executed on the Beast, on the Kings with their confederate hosts, and Satan being bound for a period in the Abyss, the next, and *third* view, given of the Saints is that of an august assembly enthroned in state. Here, as we suppose, is described the Saints ruling under Christ the earth for the thousand years.

This temporary and transition state (blessed ^{and} while it lasted) being now broken up, and having ended in a wide-spread (I say not universal) apostasy—Satan also being now finally cast, not into the Abyss, but into the Lake of Fire,—the universal judgment having taken place, and the universal conflagration having reduced the earth to primeval chaos—we have, now, with the "new Heavens and new Earth," a *fourth* manifestation of the Saints, and that by so much more glorious than their former condition, by how much more excellent the new Heavens and Earth are than the old.* Accordingly, the Bride is not now characterized by her white byssine garments, but by the glorious *state* into which she is introduced—we have now not the dress, but the

* See Appendix B.

dwelling and *circumstances* of the Saints. Indeed, this progress may be marked throughout, each manifestation of the Bride being in the ascending scale of dignity and felicity. First, there is merely the robe of beauty and of glory,—then, the inauguration into power with Christ by following Him to do battle on the foe,—then, the solemn and quiescent enthronement in peaceful glories,—And, lastly, the entrance on an *eternal* state, exceeding in splendour and dignity, the superior felicity of which apparently consists in the beatific vision of the Almighty. For “the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and *they shall see His face.*” *

7. And, now, having thus endeavoured to establish that the New Jerusalem state is post-millennial, and carries to the highest revealed climax of glory and felicity the Church of the Saints, let us mark some of the many particulars which are afforded us of this City of our praise.

And by the term “City” we understand both *place*, and *inhabitants*. Place, because man subsisting as a compound being, consisting of spirit and matter, and that matter, though glorified, being his through eternity, there is a needs be that he must have *place* as his abode. Then, as to inhabitants,—these of course exist, they being

* See Appendix C.

of a city the most essential part, and bearing to the dwelling the same relation as spirit does to body.

a. Now, of this City we first observe, that it descends "from God out of heaven," herein agreeing with the word from the Hebrews, "whose Builder and Maker is God." The City of the Prophets is of the earth, and built by man; but the City of the Patriarchs and Saints is from heaven, and constructed by God. And it constitutes, we apprehend, the glory and masterpiece of the Divine Architect.

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 71. *h* Though this City be heavenly, its seat, however, is the earth. John sees it "*coming down*," while the sequel of the vision seems to fix the earth as its locality. And there is a propriety in this. Man, as to his body, being made of earth, the earth witnesses the highest exaltation to which that body attains. Moreover, the earth also having been the scene of the conflicts, degradation, sorrow, and ~~cross~~ of the Saints, doth now behold their glory, felicity, exaltation, and crown.
 * That planet which hath for thousands of years echoed to their sighs, groans, and prayers, shall now, remoulded by the plastic hand of the Divine Architect, for ever resound with their jubilee of praise.—The earth, or, at any rate, the immediate

region of the earth, will, from this vision, we apprehend, form the final seat of the felicity of the blessed.

c. In this state of felicity we further observe a reverting to the facts and furniture of Paradise. Here, also, we have more than Paradise regained. Admirable was man's first abode, and pronounced by Him who made it, "very good." But here is a Paradise surpassing in glory, by how much more excellent its inhabitants are than those for whom the first was constituted.

But, mark some of the points of similitude between the two states.

Both are the abode of pure and happy beings.—In both God freely converses with his people.—The head of one is the first Adam—The head of the other is the second.—In the first its inhabitants are constituted lords, by the decree, "Let them have dominion;" and in the second its possessors "reign for ever and ever," In each there is a River; and in each there is the Tree of Life.

But this remarkable difference, among others, I observe,—that in the heavenly Paradise there is *no Tree of knowledge*, as also no restrictive command. Nor will it be needed; for, there will be the beatific vision,—“They shall see His face,”

and in that sight all knowledge will be included,—yea, “we shall then know, even as we are known.”

One other point of dissimilarity I also notice. As in that state there will be no room left for desire ungratified, so there will be no Tempter, as in the first Paradise, to molest. Satan plunged into his final abode, “the Lake of fire,” his influences will thus be finally restrained.

d. In the light of this glorious City, we further read, that “the nations walk.”* Hence, it appears that there are on the new earth nations in ~~“flesh,”~~ and these moreover subjected to kingly ^{Divine} rule; for, it is written, “The kings of the earth do bring their glory and their honour into it.” Where also mark the expression, “Kings of *the earth.*”

And here, two facts seem to open upon us:—

The perpetuity of this earth;

The perpetuity of the human race.

In regard to the ~~first~~, it is written, “That it should not be removed for ever.” (Ps. civ.)

Science appears to have confirmed a fact, which

* In our Bibles it is, “The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it.” Scholz, Bloomfield, however, and other good critics, reject “them that are saved,” and read—“*The nations shall walk in the light thereof.*” And this appears the correct reading.

the Mosaic account does not in the least contradict, and which, inasmuch indeed as by observation it might be ascertained, it was no part of the divine scheme to notice, namely, that previous to the creation of man this globe has existed in various forms, and undergone many changes. It has been, as I believe is generally agreed, in a fluid state through the action of fire. Indeed, some of it is now in this fluid state,—witness the streams of lava which flow from the craters of volcanoes.

Again, since man has inhabited the earth, it has experienced a great revolution through the action of *water*, “whereby the world that then was perished.” And we know that it is to experience another revolution through *fire*, whereby it will again “perish.” Not, however, “perish” in the sense of annihilation, of which we can see nothing whether from Revelation or former experience, but in the sense of *change*, as before, by the diluvial waters.

The earth, therefore, we conclude, “abideth for ever,” (Eccl. i.,) because we have no notice of its annihilation; and because here, in the eternal state, we have, with several circumstances of materialism, the earth still presented to us.*

* See Appendix D.

Next, as to this earth's inhabitants.

If the glorified saints are described as reigning, it is but natural to conclude that there are those over whom they will reign. And these, we may presume, are pointed out in "the nations, who walk in the light of the heavenly Jerusalem," they and their kings being under the dominion of its glorified Rulers.

And these nations, from "the everlasting covenant which God made with, or rather gave to, Noah and Abraham," consist, we apprehend, of Jew and Gentile, the perpetuity of whose generations, by the following Scriptures, seems to be Divinely secured.

To Noah the Lord gives a covenant, as also to every living creature, "*for perpetual generations.*" To Abraham and his seed God gives Canaan for an "*everlasting possession,*" by an "*everlasting covenant;*" and this covenant in the Psalms is spoken of as "*commanded to a thousand generations.*" And, in Ezekiel, in that late period of their history, Isaiah having a little before said, "The people of my holiness have possessed it but *a little while,*"—the land is promised to the Jews, "*to their children's children for ever.*"

Surely, in these covenants (very few extracts from which have been selected) there is notice of perpetuity.

And the falling short of anything equal to an accomplishment of these promises up to the present, or any future given age of the world, will be shown from the following statement of generations from the time of Adam :—

From Adam to Noah	10 generations.
Noah to Abraham	10
Abraham to David	14
David to the Captivity . .	14
The Captivity to our Saviour	14
Our Saviour to the supposed date, A.D. 2000	56

Giving a total of . . 118 generations.

Now, what an entire falling short have we here of anything in the least approaching to the “*for ever*,” and the “*thousand generations*” of the covenants! Are a hundred and twenty generations, or twice, or thrice that number, to fulfil the vast promise of the Eternal? Double, or quadruple, or quadruple again, the present 6000 years of the world’s duration—will this meet the fulness of the covenant? Assuredly, it were to dishonour God, to suppose that his promises are thus to be carried out. No; it is evident that something beyond our usual estimate is required to fill up the immensity of the promise. And this, we apprehend, is realized in *successive gene-*

rations of men in "the new earth." Thus will be carried out to the full the "for ever," and the "thousand generations" of the everlasting Covenant.*

Another light which here breaks in on us is, the aggrandizement of the Redeemer's glory in a countless seed *thus added to the present election.*

“The common conception among Christians has often been as if the redeeming love of God ~~was~~ exhausted in the company of the elect, who meet the Lord at his appearing, and are thenceforth ever with ^{his} ~~the~~ Lord. But a deeper and closer sc. And ~~the~~ ^{Scripture} reveals this further mystery of Divine goodness.”†

The present is a dispensation of election, *that* of universality. In this way will ascend to the Lamb from *successive* and *endless* generations successive and endless praise.

Thus also such texts are explained as Rom. v. 19: "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We thus see that

* Mr. Birks, in his sixteenth chapter on "Daniel's Visions," has fully entered into the above subject. He there, also, observes that, in the second commandment, "shewing mercy unto thousands" must mean, from the context, *thousands of generations*.

† "Bloomsbury Lectures," 1843. No. XI. By Rev. E. Bickersteth.

II. AN INQUIRY INTO THE CHARACTER OF THOSE FOR WHOM THIS CITY IS PREPARED, would form the second head of discourse, were our treatment of the text of a general and ordinary character.

And very pleasant, and withal by God's grace profitable, would it here be to speak experimentally and practically of that which belongs to pilgrims, of which by experience many of us have perhaps learned much,—taught as we have been, by longer or shorter travel, in the pains and pleasures of the way, in the great art and assiduity of our Enemy, and in the greater power and continued sufficiency of our Divine Guide and Captain.

We might feelingly discourse to you of the manner in which a man is first led to go on pilgrimage by the mighty call of the Spirit applying the written Word. We might speak of the lets and hinderances from within and from without (the former greater than the latter) which detain him in his course. We might dwell on the steady progress made by the Christian on his heavenward way,—of his realizing and enduring faith,—of his lively hope,—of his perseverance unto the end. On all these things, I say, we might dwell, and, by God's goodness, profitably dwell. But omitting all these, and many more,

both scenes and principles of pilgrim life, we proceed at once, in the last place, to show,—

III. THE SUITABILITY OF THE CITY OF FOUNDATIONS TO THE WANTS OF THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM.

And here I must call on my readers again to remember, that man ever will be, as he now is, a complex being, material as well as spiritual: *not a shade*, as we read in the ancient classics,—and, may I not add, often in Christian theologians? No; for ever be banished from the Christian Church these vague, unsubstantial, ungrounded ideas as to the future. The Resurrection will reveal neither saints nor the wicked as *shades*, but as *substances*,—spirits, as now, clad in their material tabernacle; and the saints in that tabernacle then glorified, shining as shone the body of Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration. Jesus has assumed, and that for ever, materialism. Wondrous truth! That materialism He has glorified by exalting it to the right hand of God. And in the glorification of His materialism we have both the type and earnest of our own. Of this truth, thousands of years ago, David had clear perception, when he cried, “I shall awake up after thy likeness.” And of the same we all have revelation in the memorable

Scripture, which declares, "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

Now, the mixed character of the state prepared for the saints in the New Jerusalem agrees, it appears, precisely with the complex constitution of those who are to inhabit it. These partake both of earth and heaven; and this state, into which they are finally brought, is a *heaven upon earth*,—"the City descending from heaven; for, "they bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."

In the physical and spiritual complex of the New Jerusalem will be an exact suitability to the two-fold nature and wants of its glorified inhabitants.

Let us now mark how this celestial state will supply the gratification of those wants and desires, which we may presume, as men, and as regenerate and perfected men, will ever belong to us.

1. *The attainment of a state of good* will be one great boon of this celestial City. In our present condition, formed by God for enjoyment, earnestly desiring and seeking it, by reason of vanity we cannot attain it.

In the future it will not be thus. Felicity will be present; and it will be full. Every desire

will be gratified, and every desire (oh, blessed state!) will be in perfect unison with the mind of God. Between body and spirit there will then be a felicitous and undisturbed union, and neither desiring that which God does not desire, there will be to both perfect and unalloyed gratification.

2. *The perfect Holiness* which the New Jerusalem will afford will meet the strong and insatiable desire after sanctification which the believing man daily experiences.

Save the vision of Jesus, there is nothing, suppose, which the believer so earnestly longs for as holiness. Daily, and that often for a long period of years, he pursues it. In part he attains, it only sufficiently to enable him to taste its excellence, and hence to long for more.

Hereafter, however, it will not be so. That which is now in part shall then be perfect. None are admitted into the City but the holy, and as perfection belongs to its inhabitants, so perfection in holiness. Then, shall the insatiable desires of the believing soul after this, the object of its solicitude, be fully, and for ever, gratified.

3. So with *the vision of Jesus*.

The ruling principle of a believer's heart is faith,—the ruling passion of his heart is love to Christ. Now, the City of the future will reveal to

him Christ, the object of his faith and love. He will enter his presence, will mark his lineaments, will contemplate his form, will hear his voice, will share his smile, will receive his salutations, will be associated to his steps, will partake his glory! Not only will he see Him, whom with the most intense love he has long followed. and with continued solicitude has longed to behold—but, he will see Him under circumstances the most auspicious, and in a state the most delightful. For, not only shall he see, but be seen by Him whom he loves, and by Him be confessed before angels and before men.

4. *The exchange of the principles of faith and hope* for the things which form now their objects will further manifest the suitability of New Jerusalem to the pilgrim's wants.

Faith is laborious, incompatible with a state of enjoyment and perfection. Hope is only good and delightful in the absence of the thing hoped for. Both belong to a condition of imperfection, such as the present now is.

But, hereafter it will not be so. The several objects of faith will then be realized. We shall no more walk *by faith*, but *by sight*. The struggle of faith, that sustained effort in which we are engaged till emancipated from our present thrall, will then be over. And then it will be an

immense enjoyment to walk without effort, as without fear—to *see*, where now we *believe*.

So, also, with Hope. To obtain the object of our hope, to live on that object, and to find in it a fulness on which to live, this will be blessed indeed. Now, we scarcely know anything but by faith and hope; then, we shall dismiss them for the possession of the very things in which we now believe, and for which now we hope.

5. *The Ascendancy of our cause* in the City of foundations will gratify another of the aspirations of the Christian.

God has implanted in man a strong desire after ~~victory~~; and to the full this is shared by the regenerate man in that cause which he has so heartily embraced, the cause of Christ and of God. His life is bound up in his Master's quarrel, for the sake of which he lightly esteems it. And to see that quarrel triumphant in the day of doom, oh! what joy will this cause the dweller of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Hark! already the anticipatory Alleluia, "Salvation unto the Lord our God, for He hath judged the Great Whore, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hands. And again they said, Alleluia." And mark the solemn sequel—"Her smoke rose up for ever and ever."—Yes; the

Saints are on the side of victory ; and though now struggling, and often depressed, yet to them it is appointed to see their cause triumphant by reason of Him whose cause is their cause, and who must put every enemy under his feet.

6. There, too, will meet its full gratification that *love of immortality* so strong in man—that love of immortality, which, filling the world with monuments called immortal, hath ever, and will ever, because wrongly directed, and to secure the immortality it seeks.

But, here the prize so coveted is found.—Ye, whose fervent aspirations are continually urging you by courses excentric, or superior, to seek the applause of man, and in man's memory to live, seek, oh ! seek, *the applause of God*, and in God's and in man's memory ye shall never die. He hath prepared for them that love Him a City, not as in unintended mockery they call the ruined city of the Cæsars—*eternal*, but in truth *an eternal City*—a City of strong and everlasting foundations, whose builder is the Eternal God. Seek, I pray you seek, lovers of immortality, this City. Here is no failure, no ruined hopes, no disappointments. And here, and here only, can be gratified that panting desire after immortality, which from the foundation of the world has

thrilled through the hearts of the highest and the lowest, but the secret of the gratification of which hath alone lain with the people of God.*

7. The suitability of this City to the wants of earth's sojourner is further shown by the gratification it affords to *his love of power and sovereignty*.

"Hav' Thou dominion," was the sovereignty originally given by God to man, "over earth and earth's furniture." And with the authority was also imparted the love, and power, of its exercise. This love of sovereignty, disproportioned by the fact, has ever been strongly felt by man; whilst the power to exercise it has more or less existed. Without some operation of this power society could not subsist. In ^{the} state man will be restored to its due exercise, and will not be hurried away by *ambition*, which is its immoderate desire. The record concerning man's future dominancy over the earth is, "God hath put all things in subjection under his feet." And, "They shall reign for ever and ever." Here will be the full gratification of man's desires, and the full exercise of man's powers, in sovereignty, the carrying out of that love of power, which (now often used for personal aggrandisement) will then be exercised only for the general good.

8. *Beauty and glory* will meet the accepted

pilgrim in the New Jerusalem, and satisfy those desires he now experiences for them.

Physical beauty, to a certain degree, he sees in the creation now around him. Moral beauty he sees commenced in others and in himself. Of glory he now sees nothing, the Church being in sackcloth, and his own state compassed by infirmities many and great. But, the future.—Yes; it is that which shall give beauty and glory. “We, according to his promise, look for a new heavens.” These will be ^{far} more beautiful than the present; and yet how fair are these! “And a new earth;” this also will be more beautiful than the present, because ^{for} a higher grade of beings. And ^{now} how fair is it! And to crown all, in these “dwelleth righteousness.” Physical and moral loveliness in sweet accord will here meet, and the result will be, what earth since the Fall has never witnessed,—*Perfection*. Then, shall we behold forms, and converse with beings of surpassing beauty, whom it shall neither harm us to admire, nor them to be admired. Then shall the love of the creature ever be in continued and unresisting submission to the love of Jesus. Whilst the glory that shall surround Him, and His, who shall tell! Only, Lord, may we soon behold it, even the King in his beauty. Even so. Amen.

9. *The reunion of friends in Christ, parted by death*, constitutes another feature in the Heavenly City, on which the Christian loves to dwell.

How sweet the society of those who are departed! How odorous their lives, how pleasant their deaths, how sweet their love, how cherished their memory! But, how sweeter far their society under the happy auspices of the Heavenly Jerusalem, and in the presence of Jesus! Here loved as they were, still they were imperfect; but there perfect, perfected in Him who is the Head. And here the certainty of separation cast an alloy into enjoyment; but, there united to them, we are ~~united for ever~~. Blessed state, which in bands indissoluble shall link together those, who here joined in Jesus, shall there from his presence, and from each other, never again be sundered!

10. And, *a place of society*, as well as a place of meeting, is this City of our God. The future state is not figured by a solitude, and by eremites, but by a *city* and its *inhabitants*; every thing replete with life, and with society. Even so; God has now constituted man for fellowship, and so constituted him for ever. The new heavens and earth will be the scene of friendly greetings, and of loving salutations, of unfading friendships, and of all the sacred charities of the new life. The very contrary to Rome's forged sanctity of monachism,

of solitaires, and of anchorites, will be the sanctity of heaven. Of this dark and gloomy system the Gospel neither now, nor hereafter, knows anything. All is cheerful, *because all is social*. And the crowning point of that society will be the gathering together in one communion all the people of God now scattered abroad, in Jesus.

11. And this brings us, lastly, to speak of *that full and final development of the Church*, so much desired by Christians, which the New Jerusalem state brings in.

The believing man, whose eyes are opened to the future, sees that vain is any expectation, in the present state, of Church perfection ~~in the~~ way of unity or uniformity. But, to such an one the future—the Church of the future—when every member will be holy and regenerate, and Christ in Person shall be present—to such an one it is the future to which he turns his eye, and towards which he directs his expectations. The New Jerusalem will reveal a perfect Church of Kings and Priests—perfect in unity within, for they shall have one heart and one mind—and perfect in uniformity without, for they shall have One present and visible Head. Here will be a blessed Church state indeed. The Christian Pilgrim feeling the misery of the poor Church's present condition, and himself from time to time

sorely wounded by the thrusts and stabs some who call themselves (not called by Christ) Shepherds do cruelly inflict on him—the Christian, I say, groaning under all this misery, and seeing that generally in the Church the worse men do have the better part, he doth earnestly long for another and a better Church state. Hence, doth he solace himself with that which is written in Revelation of God's congregation in the Celestial City, and earnestly longeth for the time of its manifestation, crying, "But thou, Lord, how long?" And, "Lord, when wilt thou comfort me?"

And, now, let a few observations close our subject.

HOW VAST AND MAGNIFICENT ARE THE REALITIES which the word of the future reveals to us, and hence how blameable are they who speak of solemn meditation and of discourse thereon as "speculations," and such like!

No: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." And as it respects that particular portion of it to which our attention has been now mainly called, an especial blessing is pronounced on those who study it. "Blessed is he that readeth."

Observe also, further; through ignorance of unfulfilled prophecy the Jews of our Lord's day could not "discern the signs of the times;" whilst for their blindness on the same head the disciples were thus sharply rebuked by our Lord:—"O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets have spoken." As, therefore, Christian men should with great reverence and caution enter on the study of the unfulfilled oracles of God—so should Christian men, in speaking of them in these studies, use moderation and heed, lest by speaking disparagingly of these studies they should in some sort offer slight to a portion of God's holy Word.

Very rich and varied is the mine of the future, and withal little explored. May the Lord grant that those who take no interest in this study, or are even opposed to it, may by God's grace be made sensible of its value, and come and labour with us therein. And, let us continually pray that to us, who for a longer or shorter time have been engaged in this work, the Lord the Spirit will be pleased to give more light, and to bring us into a clearer perception out of his Word, of those things which must shortly come to pass.

ABRAHAM AND THE PATRIARCHS LOOKED FOR

THE CITY WHICH HATH FOUNDATIONS; AND WE PROFESS TO DO THE SAME.

Let us, then, take heed that our knowledge of, and desire to obtain that City, is one with theirs. We look for a city—for *The* City. But have we laboured to obtain clear views of that City? We look for the City. Is it, then, the object of our daily aspiration? Reader, deal candidly with thyself. Dost thou really desire the possession of this City? Is it on thy mind, and in thine heart? Is it the City of thy vows and of thy prayers?

For the sake of this City Abraham confessed himself ~~as~~ a Stranger and Pilgrim on earth. Say, is it thus with thee? Reader, as the City is a reality, so is the experience of it a reality also. If thou art a Christian, thou hast experienced something of this reality. Test thyself, and remember that while the cities of earth shall be burned up, "the City which is from above" shall endure for ever. Separate thyself thoroughly from earth and earthly things. "Gather up thy wares out of the land, O inhabitant of the fortress;" and see that thy whole, thy sole, thy entire choice be fixed on "the City of my praise,"—the New Jerusalem.

THE UNITY OF HOPE BETWEEN BELIEVERS

OF THE PATRIARCHAL AND CHRISTIAN DISPENSATIONS IS REMARKABLE.

Their hope was *The City*, and ours is the same, and both they and we yet wait for its accomplishment. Happy accomplishment, which shall unite in one common fruition the heirs of hope of many generations! "When the desire cometh, it is a Tree of Life."

Lastly, HOW GRAND IS THE CLIMAX WHICH THE BRINGING IN OF THE NEW JERUSALEM PUTS TO THE SAVIOUR'S WORK OF REDEMPTION.

We frequently speak now of Redemption as though it were completed. It is only begun. Do we not groan yet under the power of sin and of temptation? And are not our bodies enfeebled by age and sickness, and decomposed at death? Where, then, is redemption? The reply is, It is begun. We are delivered *entirely* from the guilt of sin, and *partially* from the power of sin. Hence, "we ourselves who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of our bodies." It is then, at the resurrection, called here "the adoption," that redemption shall be fully manifested and perfected. The body shall be redeemed from the grave. The spirit shall be fully emancipated

from the power of sin. Man's habitation, the earth, shall also be redeemed from all iniquity, whilst the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven shall give to redemption perfection and eternity. 'Then, and not till then, shall be seen the fulness and perfection of the Redeemer's work. Then shall the top-stone be put to it. Then shall redemption, the result and fruit of thousands of years of preparation, shine forth in all its perfection and glory, the crowning work of the Almighty, the admiration of men and angels, through eternity.

ETERNAL FATHER, by Thy sovereign will was ~~this work from eternity~~ devised.

ETERNAL SON, by Thy obedience even unto death was this work perfected.

ETERNAL SPIRIT, by Thy effectual energy is this work applied to all the heirs of glory.

ETERNAL TRINITY, contemplating this wonderful mystery, lost in wonder we adore Thee, praying Thee that we and thy whole Church may soon by sight perceive that which by faith we embrace, and so "enter through the gates into the City," even into the joy of our Lord.

APPENDIX.

A.

THE SPIRITUAL WHORE TO BE DESTROYED BY FIRE.

"I DRAW the following conclusions as to the probable progress of the fast-coming future. That . . . the fate of Rome and of the Papal Ecclesiastical State in Italy, and Papal Metropolitan Bishoprick, . . . is to be effected by the sudden and tremendous agency of earthquake and volcanic fire, a mode of destruction not obscurely intimated by certain very striking allusive expressions in other prophecies, both of the Old and New Testament, and thus expected, as we find, alike by ancient Jewish rabbies and Christian fathers; not to add that the very nature of the Italian soil has forced on many a mind in different ages, the thought of its almost preparedness for such a catastrophe.

It is not Ætna, the Lipari volcanic islands, Vesuvius, and the Phlegæan fields, that alone offer visible indication of the physical aptness and preparedness of Italy for such a catastrophe. The great Apennine Mountain-chain and its branches are very mainly volcanic in character from Reggio to Verona; and the country of Rome more especially, is as strikingly so, almost as that of Sodom itself."—(*Elliott, "Horæ Apocalypticæ,"* vol. iv., p. 106.)

And, again, (page 224,)—"The solid crust of this earth

shall be broken, and fountains burst forth from its inner deep, not as once, of water, but of liquid fire; of fire now sent up within it, as in a treasure-house, and intended as the final habitation of devils: that this, I say, shall then burst forth and engulf the vast territory of the Papal Babylon, and the godless of its inhabitants."

"While geology presents to us a body of evidence irresistible, (if only we suppose the laws of matter the same formerly as now,) to the fact of our earth having been originally fluid from intense heat, and having gradually, in the course of ages, cooled down, so as to allow of an outer crust, solid and mild in temperature, such as we now experience it,—geology also calls attention to another fact, viz., that this cooling down is only superficial. Of this the ~~gradual increase of heat~~ observed on descending to any depth below the surface,* and the ejection, from time to time, in all quarters of the globe, of boiling streams of lava, and other minerals from below the primitive granite, furnish sufficient indication. And the irresistible violence of these eruptions of the more central earth's boiling and inflammable materials, shows that there is, as it were, a train laid, that waits but the bidding of the Almighty to break up the earth's solid crust, and wrap this our world, or any fated part thereof, in a universal conflagration."

* In round numbers we obtain an increase of more than one deg. of Fahrenheit's thermometer for every hundred feet of sinking.—("Edinburgh Review," No. 165, p. 27.) I am told greater than this.—M. B.

B.

PERIOD OF THE NEW JERUSALEM STATE.

The reasons which lead me humbly to suppose that the New Jerusalem state means neither the Jerusalem of the Prophets, nor exists prominently during the Millennium, are as follows:—

1. *The Order of the narrative*, the thread of which, without necessity, should not be broken.

2. The state is spoken of as existing in a "*New Heavens and New Earth*," here in the prophecy first mentioned.

3. In this new Heavens and Earth there is "*no more sea*," whereas, just above (ch. xx.) at the close of the former, or millennial state, the sea is existing.

4. In this New Jerusalem the saints "*reign for ever and ever*." In the Millennium their rule is limited.

5. This must be a post-millennial state, from its being afflicted by "*no death, sorrow, nor curse*," to say nothing of its other imperfections, whereas the apostasy at the end of the millennial dispensation will witness the existence of all these.

6. With this view of the subject well agree *the words of St. Peter*: "We, according to his promise, look for a new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Here, we have the "*new heavens and new earth*," (surely those of the Apocalypse,) and righteousness—is it not consummate righteousness?—in them.

But, it is not to be denied that there are difficulties in this interpretation.

1. In this New Jerusalem state it is said concerning the "Tree of Life," which is in it, that its "*leaves are for the healing of the nations.*"

Not, however, that there is much in this objection, for, as the Tree of Life in Paradise originally, under more happy circumstances, would have been for man's use (no doubt with some specific benefit, bodily or spiritual), so, here, the Tree of Life again restored to man—and, as I suppose, man in the flesh—will be for his benefit. They are the *leaves* which are here especially mentioned, which makes the passage peculiar. The word "*healing*"—"for the healing of the nations"—in the Greek *therapeia* occurs in the New Testament only four times, twice rendered "*healing*," and twice "*household*." Scapula and Parkhurst render the word in its first meaning by *service*. If it may be so translated here (~~which seems doubtful~~) the difficulty is removed. ~~However, whatever the difficulty, the period of fulfilment~~ will make it clear.

2. A further objection to the view here taken is, that the Wife being seen by the Apostle (ch. xix.) *before* the thousand years' reign, *the marriage was then perfected*, and therefore that ch. xxi. and xxii. must be considered as belonging to that period. To this I reply, that though the marriage was then "*come, and the Bride had made herself ready,*" and the marriage supper in the slaughter of the Kings was celebrated, that the marriage itself was not consummated till subsequently, when the Bride is manifested in the full blaze of glory, and her Spouse is declared to be *dwelling with her*—"The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it." In other words, as before stated, there appears to be a gradual development of dignity and

excellence, up to this period, which is the consummation, and the climax of the saints' felicity.

If any one were to say that the *Reigners* during the Millennium were only a part of the first Resurrection, I do not know that I should object.—The Lord, I trust, will soon give us more light on the order of this glorious people.

3. The greatest difficulty, however, consists, as, it appears to me, in the period to be assigned to "the new Heavens and new Earth."

Those mentioned, as above alluded to, by St. Peter are by him taken from Isa lxx. and lxxi., for here we have the "*promise*" of them, and I think here only. But in these Heavens and Earth Peter teaches us "*dwelleth righteousness.*"—I presume universal perfect righteousness, as in Rev. xxi. and xxii. But, the Prophet (ch. lxxvi. 20) refers to sin, as then existing, and appears clearly to point only to a period of millennial, and consequently imperfect, blessedness. How, then, is this difficulty to be met? I presume in two ways—One, by supposing that the Prophet, (as is common), in placing the new Heavens and Earth (v. 17) before what follows, does not make the *order of time of fulfilment* to depend on the *order of place in the prophecy*, (in other words, that this is not a chronological prophecy). The other, that the new Heavens and Earth *begin to be brought in* at the commencement of the Millennium; for example, in regard to that part which pertains to Palestine, where Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, state that *topographical* changes shall then and there take place.

A *total pre-millennial* renovation, if I understand him rightly, is Mr. Elliott's view—to whom I would take this

opportunity of bearing my humble tribute of thanks for his most valuable and learned labours, though in his interpretation of the millennial dispensation, and in other points, differing from him. Comparing together the difficulties of the two modes of interpretation, it certainly appears to me that the most simple way of understanding the prophecy is to make the two last chaps. of Rev. *post-millennial*.

C.

PROGRESSION IN GOD'S WORKS.

All the ways of God connected with man seem to be marked by *progression* in perfection. Thus we have:—

1. The First and Second Adam.
2. The Law, ~~and Gospel~~, and Future State.
3. The present and future condition of our souls and bodies.
4. Christ first a Prophet, then a Priest, and last a King.
5. Satan now an outcast from God, then bound in the Abyss, and lastly cast into the Lake of Fire.

This *progress* aids the idea that the millennial state of *the saints* being better than that of man in Paradise, may be pointed out in the end of Revelation as being itself to be eclipsed by something after higher and better, viz., a celestial Paradise.

D.

PERPETUITY OF MATERIALISM.

“This may serve to rectify an imagination, of which we think that all must be conscious—as if the grossness of

had made, and behold it was very good." (Gen. i. 31.)

When the Lord pronounces sentence upon his own works, we should bear this in mind, that He speaks not comparatively but positively. Hence, when He says that a thing is "very good," it is actually so. When we speak concerning ourselves, and the things which we say, or think, or do, it is otherwise: we speak comparatively, for in every thing we fall short. Thus the economy which the Lord introduced was perfect in its kind, being "very good." It was, moreover, an undivided dominion that was entrusted to Adam, when he stood as ~~the viceroy~~ of Jehovah in our world, reflecting his image; and his dominion was thus necessarily a peaceful dominion; and as long as he ruled obediently for God, so long he ruled in righteousness. But this state of things came speedily to an end, as the history appears to warrant, and the sin of man subjected our world to many rulers. Of these *Satan's kingdom* stands prominently forward as the rival both of God and man; and his permitted title, of "the god of this world," claims for him a precedence in our meditations.

What, we here ask, has been *the extent* of this kingdom? Wheresoever the serpent's seed are,

found, there the subjects of Satan's kingdom are found likewise; and, as all men naturally engendered of Adam are conceived in sin, until the act of spiritual regeneration take place, the population of that kingdom is commensurate with the unregenerate population of the whole world. But *the character* of this kingdom may be ascertained from the combined testimony of the word, and all past and present experience. It is founded in falsehood, and built up by all deceivableness of unrighteousness. A lie was the vast foundation-stone of this no less vast superstructure! "Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil!" ~~Here~~ behold this stone, this tried stone of iniquity! A lie, which for its blasphemous boldness is hardly surpassed by the awful interests that it involved: the usurped dominion of fallen angels for six thousand years over a blighted world, and an eternity of torment, with myriads of lost sinners from among the children of men, in that hell which God hath prepared for the devil and his angels. But the character of the foundation is well maintained throughout the superstructure. When the Holy Ghost is describing those who are the subjects of Satan's kingdom, he thus portrays them: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of

them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 4.) But we meet with another confirmation of our statement. The whole of the Papal system has been well described as the masterpiece of Satan; and, when we consider the mixture of truth and error—a small delusive portion of the former, which is more than neutralized by the overwhelming proportion of the latter, we know how to appreciate St. Paul's description of that 'mystery of iniquity,' "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." (1 Thess. ii. 7, 9, 10.) And such is Satan's kingdom!

Death's dominion next claims our attention.

In *extent* universal, reaching even to "those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." (Rom. v. 14.) Wheresoever the foot of man has trod, and redeemed for himself a portion of this earth's heritage, there death has followed with equal step, as man's second self! Wheresoever man has planted the standard of humanity on the waste wilderness, death, in solemn mockery of his short-lived triumph, has raised his nodding plumes, and unfurled his black banner! Wheresoever man has swayed the sceptre

of his hard-earned dominion, there the cold hand of death has stretched his iron rod, and, sure of his victim, has triumphed over him in the grave ! The very exceptions of Enoch and Elias confirm the rule : bright spots amid the darkness of preceding dispensations ! Men look at them, not with an eye of envy, but with an earnest desire to partake of their high privilege, that, like them, they may escape submission to the king of terrors, and, instead of sinking into the chambers of the tomb, be rapt away by a "chariot of fire and horses of fire," into the presence of God !

But, if such be the extent of death's dominion, ~~what is its character ?~~ It is capable of a three-fold description, and when we say, that it is *penal, fearful, and sorrowful*, we state no more than the facts will maintain.

The penal character of death none, I think, can deny : our very nature is instinctively abhorrent of it, and men will care not to part with all, if only they may retain their "life as a prey." (Jer. xxi. 9.) True it is that the Lord of life has fulfilled his own prediction : "O death, I will be thy plagues ; O grave, I will be thy destruction," (Hos. xiii. 14;) and has ransomed his people from the power of the one, and has redeemed them from the sting of the other. But, what a measure of the gift of faith does it require, when realizing

the unfolding verities of the coming eternity, to say from the heart, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

That its character is *fearful*, who can deny? To every unredeemed sinner it is justly a cause of fear, though a hardened heart of unbelief may have been followed by such judicial blindness and insensibility as to believe a lie; and the awful realities of truth being reserved for the other side of the threshold of time, the sinner may have passed away into eternity, supposing, in the very article of death, that there was neither angel nor spirit,—no heaven, no hell; verily, no reward for the righteous; verily, no God that judgeth the earth. But this is the exception to the rule. For what saith the Scripture? Let Heb. ii. 14, 15, reply, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." But, beside this, can we doubt that it is *sorrowful*? Wherefore do the mourners go about the streets? Is it not because man goeth to his long home? What is it that rends asunder the tenderest ties, that causes

affliction's tears to flow, that fills whole families with unfeigned grief, that embitters a cup, which in every other respect may overflow with blessings, which dulls the very smiles of nature's face, and makes the beams of heaven, by their contrast of seeming gladness, to increase the woe? It is death. Where did Mary weep, and Martha, and the Jews also which were with them? At the grave of Lazarus. And why did they weep? Because Lazarus was dead. And "when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her," why did Jesus weep? Because of the sorrows of those he loved, sorrows following in the train of death. But shall it be alway thus? Not so, Lord Jesus, for thou hast said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me shall live though he die; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall not die eternally." (John xi. 25.) And such is death's dominion. We now come to *man's rule*, in its *extent variable* and *divided*, and in its *character* somewhat differing from the other two.

When we consider the progress of the family of man upon the face of the earth, we find ourselves borne out in our definition, whether before the flood, or in the ages and generations which have succeeded that judgment. With greater or less rapidity the earth has been in divers parts overspread, and the rule of govern-

ment has been as variable as the inheritance of the nations was divided. But the more important fact is the *character* of man's rule, or, more correctly, perhaps, of his misrule, for six thousand years. It has been *restless, unstable, wavering*. Commencing commonly from small beginnings, it has proceeded gradually, with more or less rapidity, to its meridian height, and then sunk down into its original nothingness. In its conquests we find selfishness, cruelty, and bloodshed, triumphantly riding over prostrate nations; and we hear "the voice of our brother's blood" crying unto God from the ground for vengeance upon the head of those that spilt it. Surely this is no overdrawn picture, no exaggerated representation of the facts of the case, though it be bitter testimony against the sons of men. But God himself has furnished us with his own teaching upon this subject, and which we think to be illustrative of the truth of our description. When the Lord would reveal his future purposes concerning a part of the kingdoms of this world in their connexion with the Church on earth, he gave greater publicity to that revelation by imparting it in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. Behold before us that "great image, whose brightness was excellent, and the form thereof terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his

belly and his thighs of ~~brass~~ ^{brass}, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." (Dan. ii. 31—35.)

But we are not left to our own conjectures respecting it. God is his own interpreter, and he has made it plain. "This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things:

and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." (Dan. ii. 36—45.)

And where are these kingdoms? With one fractional exception, each has had its day of glory. Without one exception, each has taken successively the other's place. Nay, we may travel out of the vision and ask, where is Ninus, and his Nineveh? * Where is Nebuchadnezzar, that head of gold, and his Babylon? Where Cyrus, the shepherd of the Lord, and his Medo-Persian empire? Where Alexander and his Greece? Rome and her Cæsars? All, all are gone. Tigris and Euphrates still roll on in their wonted course, and, would you find that once "exceeding great city," the boast of the one, with the antiquary you must disentomb its remains from the sand of

* See Note A.

the desert; and, would you search for "the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency," the glory of the other, you must dig deep for it amongst the misshapen mounds by the waters of Babylon, which have long ceased to reflect its broad walls on her bosom, since its days have come utterly to an end, and God hath swept it with the besom of destruction. In short, one sentence belongs alike to man and to his noblest works: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But shall this last away? Does no rest remain for our restless earth? Is her perpetual motion upon her axis to be the never-ending type of the condition of those who inhabit her? Are her multitudes to be forever "like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt?" So long as her sin remains, "there is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked." But "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." (Heb. iv. 9.) And "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, when he shall send Jesus, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts iii. 19—21.) Then "God will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." (Isa. li. 3.)

II. *The future destinies of our earth, and the*

dispensation of the ages to come, now demand attention.

In referring to the first of these, we observe, *that our earth must undergo great organic changes, but not annihilation.* Such changes appear to have been connected with the chief instances of, man's delinquency. We turn naturally to the fall, and here we find the curse and its consequences: "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field." (Gen. iii. 17, 18.) The character of God's work is changed, for his blessing is supplanted by his curse. The very nature of its soil is new; and its now spontaneous produce of thorns and thistles yields reluctantly to the herb of the field, in return for painful labour; and "in the sweat of his face" man eats his daily bread. And all this for man's sake. (Gen. iii. 17.) When the earth first opened her mouth to receive man's blood, shed by the hand of man, again the submissive earth experienced a further change (at least in the case of Cain, if not of greater extent): "When thou tillest the

ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength." (Gen. iv. 12.)

We travel on to the days of Noah, when the wickedness of man was great, and we find intimations of yet further change. We read, when the time of that judgment had arrived, that "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." (Gen. vii. 11.) Thus God brought forth, as the instrument of vengeance, "the waters which were under the firmament, and the waters which were above the firmament," (Gen. i. 6, 7); and, by breaking up the crust of the earth, which inclosed the fountains of the great deep, (Job xxxviii. 8; Ps. xxiv. 2; cxxxv. 6), with "the rain that was upon the earth forty days and forty nights, the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered." (Gen. vii. 12, 19.)

It has been suggested long since, that a change took place at that time in the position of our planet with reference to the sun, which, if it were so, may account for the present unhealthy state of many portions of our earth, whilst it rendered others unfit for the habitation of man. The diminished term of human life has been considered a proof of the increased unhealthiness of our planet after the water of the flood had retired,

that whereas its antediluvian inhabitants measured their days by centuries, attaining to eight and nine hundred years: the postdiluvians (with the exception of the first generations, which appears to have been so ordained for the purpose of replenishing the earth) have measured their years by tens, and Moses tells us that "the days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." (Ps. xc. 10.) Arguing from the past, we might thus have arrived at the conclusion, that, when a new state of things was to be introduced, changes, to a certain extent, would take place; and that which analogy would suggest God's word explicitly reveals. But the amount of these changes is that which we have now to ascertain.

I have already remarked, that change, to a great extent, must take place, but not annihilation, which I believe to be the doctrine of sacred Scripture. Of the passages which speak upon this subject, there are two which would lead to the last idea. In 2 Peter iii. 10, we meet with the following announcement: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent

heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

In Rev. xx. 11, it is again declared: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." Were these the only parts of Scripture which spoke upon the subject, I confess that we could hardly have avoided this conclusion; but, as many others treat of the same, by comparing Scripture with Scripture we ascertain the truth concerning it. St. Peter himself, in a former verse of the same chapter, explains his meaning. "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of ~~God~~ the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, *perished*." (2 Peter iii. 5, 6.) And, having drawn an undeniable comparison between the two cases of the flood in the days of Noah, and of the judgment by fire which is yet to come in the day of the Lord; and having stated, in the former case, that "the world which then was *perished*," he teaches us that, though the expression be strong, *the work of annihilation will proceed no further than it proceeded in the days of Noah*. Hence, as it continued the same earth still, after the former judgment, still remaining in

the muster-roll of creation, it shall be the same earth still after the latter judgment, though subjected to such great changes, in connexion with the surrounding firmament, as to justify the terms, "new heavens and a new earth." But Dan. vii. 14 establishes the same fact: "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting¹ dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." And when we recollect that, whilst "the heavens are the Lord's, the earth hath he given to the children of men" (Ps. cxv. 16), and that he tells us again, that "the earth he hath established for ever" (Ps. lxxviii. 69), it must be the conclusion of truth, that, though great changes shall assuredly take place, by which God will *renew the face of the earth* and the *surrounding heavens*, yet it is alike true, that "he hath established the earth, and it abideth. (Ps. cxix.)

. But, *what will be the character of the dispensation in the ages to come?*

The dominion will be *undivided*, and therefore *peaceful*. "In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." (Zech. xiv. 9.) Our world shall no longer exhibit the strife and division, the warfare and bloodshed, consequent upon the con-

fighting interests and selfishness of the different nations of the family of man; one Will alone shall be then supremely obeyed, for God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven: "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." (Dan. vii. 14.) Of this blessed state the first Adam was the type, being, in this respect, a figure of him that should come. This was the ultimate end of God's purpose in the creation of man, as that was exhibited during the short-lived continuance of man in innocency: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion ~~over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the~~ air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." (Gen. i. 26; Ps. viii. 6.)

But the kingdom shall be *universal*. "In that day," says Zechariah, "the Lord shall be King over all the earth." To Daniel, also, this truth was revealed, and it is written for our learning: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that

no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Dan. ii. 35.) Which truth is echoed in the Book of Apocalypse, which teaches that, when the seventh trumpet shall have sounded, "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." (Rev. xi. 15.)

Besides this, the kingdom shall be *eternal*. Daniel speaks expressly upon the subject: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; and it shall stand for ever." (ii. 44.) And again: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (vii. 27.) And the angel Gabriel repeats the same when sent to the Virgin Mary: "And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." (Luke i. 31, 32.)

There is some difficulty in explaining what is intended by 1 Cor. xv. 28, in connexion with this. That a difference of opinion exists upon the time when this shall take place, is known to many, some supposing it to refer to that time when the Lord Jesus shall leave the Father's throne, and fulfil the promise made to Mary, by taking the throne of his father David; others concluding, that it cannot take place until the last enemy—Death, shall be destroyed, which they consider will not occur until a thousand years after that former event. One remark, however, we venture to make with reference to this subject, that ~~the eternity of the kingdom may be consistent with any difference of administration~~ of that kingdom which may be designed by 1 Cor. xv. 28.

But the concluding feature in the character of that future dispensation will be, its *stability*. How opposed to the restless, unstable, wavering condition of surrounding things! Now we have an anchor for the soul, it is true, and that anchor sure and stedfast; but it is within the veil. The present condition of things is more like a moving quicksand, and every fleeting image is employed to impress this truth upon us. Yet we are slow to believe it, though all be like "the morning
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cloud and the early dew." How refreshing to the wearied spirit will be the stability of these times! A rest for the creation of God! And when we contemplate the condition of men in the body, the same ideas prevail: "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isa. lxv. 21, 22.) What a day of jubilee will dawn upon us! Surely the everlasting mountains shall clap their hands, and the perpetual hills shall bow, when the mighty God comes forth from his place to make this earth ^{his} habitation of his holiness, the hallowed centre of the creation of God!

But how shall these things come to pass? Shall missionary exertions and existing agencies introduce a revolution so mighty and so great in quietness and peace? Look to the experience of that agency during the forty years which are past, and point to ten square miles upon the face of the globe, where, as the fruit of their labour, the knowledge of the Lord now covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. You cannot find it. Shall the one dispensation expire gently, like a

dissolving view, and come forth in all the glories of the succeeding state? Rather, "through much tribulation" shall the kingdom be brought in.

III. We now turn to *the transition state, which links the kingdoms of this world with that kingdom which cannot be moved.*

How shall this kingdom be introduced?

Here our text demands special attention: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." (Heb. xii. 26.) A reference is here clearly made by the prophet Haggai, whose words the apostle quotes, and moreover exponnds, to the events of Sinai as recorded by Moses: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God

